

A BRIEF
EXPOSITION
OF THE
EPISTLES of *Paul*
TO THE
GALATIANS
AND
EPHESIANS.

BY
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Isa. 28. 10. *For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little.*

Col. 3. 16. *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another, &c.*

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To the Right Honourable and noble Lords,
Alexander, Earl of Eglington, &c.

AND
Hugh, Lord Montgomery,
his Son ;

And to the Right Honourable & noble Lady,
The Lady Mary Lesley,
Lady Montgomery.

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

IT is decreed in Heaven, That we must
through much tribulation enter the
Kingdom of God, *Act. 14. - 22.* God
only wise hath so resolved, that, by
means of sanctified trouble the Heirs
of glory may be weaned from earth, and learn to
place their chief contentment and happinesse, not up-
on their enjoyments below, which are uncertain,
empty and perishing ; but upon things above, an in-
heritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth
not away, reserved in Heaven for them. How hard
were it to make, even those who are born of God,
long to be dissolved and bid adieu to all their sub-
lunary contentments, except the Lord in mercy did

The Epistle Dedicatory.

place a prick in every one of those roses, and make their most promising earthly comforts within a little to prove *as streams of brooks that passe away*, Job 6. 15? And how should this conciliate love to a sad and suffering lot, and make the Lord's People (who are strangers and pilgrims) delight in the way, which leadeth to such an home as Heaven is? It is indeed our unacquaintance with Scripture, and with what the Word of Truth holdeth forth to be the mind of God, while He scourgeth every *son whom He receiveth*, which doth occasion so much proud rising of spirit, or base dejectedness of mind, when the Lord doth not carve us out such a satisfying lot in all things as we would. How often do we mistake our way, and little lesse than quarrel with God? only because He hedgeth us in with thorns of affliction, that we cannot find out our lovers; and therefore that man is truly blessed whom the Lord doth not only chastise, but also *instruct out of His Law*, Ps. 94. 12. and thereby make him understand and *hear the voice of the rod, and of Him who hath appointed it*, Mica, 6. 9. And herein indeed the Lord doth greatly manifest His marvellous loving kindnesse, and in wrath remembreth mercy, that He joyneth instruction with correction, and doth furnish His afflicted People with abundant means, by which they may take up the mind of God for good unto them under His saddest dispensations, even that *the fruit of affliction is to take away their sin*, Isa. 27. -9-. that He doth punish them seven times more, and yet seven times more, untill their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they accept of the punishment of their iniquity, Levit. 26. 24, 28, 41. that though He visit their transgression with the rod, and
their

The Epistle Dedicatory.

their iniquity with stripes: Nevertheless His loving kinnesse Will He not utterly take from him, Psal. 89. 32, 33. and that when they are judged, they are chastened of the Lord, that they should not be condemned with the world, 1 Cor. 11. 32. All this, and much more to this purpose, hath the Lord made known by His Word, and doth daily inculcate and make more and more known by His sent Ministers, who, according to their Commission, do open up and apply the rich treasure of holy Scripture unto the Lords People of their charge. And, as if all this were not sufficient, He hath besides stirred up the spirits of many of His Servants in every age to commit their Labours upon Scripture unto writing, for the more publick use of the Church of God, not only in the present, but also the succeeding generations.

As for my self, I ingenuously professe, that, being conscious of mine own weaknesse, I did much incline to rest satisfied with expressing my Commission by word only in preaching to, and conferring with, my Flock and those of my charge: But, being earnestly requested, and in a manner commanded by some Reverend Brethren, whom I honour and reverence in the Lord, to draw up briefly in writ, a plain Analysis, a short and sound Exposition of, and the chief Observations grounded upon such Scriptures as I had either largely preached upon, or more briefly opened-up to the Lords People of my charge, I shewed them some of my weak endeavours of that kind to be disposed upon at their pleasure: which when they were pleased to publish and to call for more work of the same nature, expressing their confidence,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

that what I had already done, was acceptable to all that love the Truth, and would be edifying to the present and after-ages; and, being thereunto also encouraged by diverse faithfull and understanding persons, I have, in obedience to their desires, given out this other Piece to be disposed of by them as they should see good.

And seeing they have advised the publishing of it, To whom could I, with more confidence and conscience of duty, dedicate these my mean labours than to your Honours; considering, that God hath appointed me to *watch for your souls, as one who must give an account*, and that your Honours have endeavoured, for your parts, to encourage me to go about all the parts of my Ministry *with joy, and not with grief?*

My Lords, when I called to remembrance how long each of you was detained these years by-past from enjoying the benefit of my publick Ministry, by your necessitated abode elsewhere, I thought the best way to give you an account, and to make you reap some fruit of my labours in your absence, was, to present these my weak endeavours to your Honours: and what you have heard from me upon these Scriptures in publick, when you were permitted to be my hearers, I hope this little piece shall conduce to bring it to your remembrance, and the Lord Himself convey it into your hearts, there to remain, to make your Honours more and more wise to salvation, that in the day of the Lord Jesus ye may be matter of joy, and a crown of rejoycing to those who have laboured among you and spoken the Word of God unto you.

And

Nain glory Epistle

The Epistle Dedicatory.

And for you, Madam, who hath had liberty to be my hearer more frequently and constantly than my noble Lords, as I trust your Honour will observe there is a good harmony betwixt that which I taught in the Congregation and which I now publish to the world; and that this little piece shall (according to your usuall diligence in searching Scripture, and in keeping fellowship with God in the practice of all commanded duties) be improved by your Honour for your further edification and encouragment to *walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing*: So, when I consider how refreshfull it hath been often unto me to behold your sweet submission under the Lord's hand, your truly Christian courage under variety of afflictions, your tractable disposition to receive wholesome counsels, your willingnesse to be instructed in the way to life, and, in order to that end, to attend publick duties beyond many of your equals; your strengthening my hands in the work of my Ministry, as by other means, so especially by your good example amongst the People of my charge, I should judge my self very unanswerable to God, and exceeding much blame-worthy if I did not encourage your Honour to make progresse in that good way, wherein ye are already engaged. And if my present essay upon this Piece of sacred Truth do contribute any thing to this end, it shall be matter of thanksgiving from me unto the Lord, who alone *doth teach His People to profit*.

And finally, I do professe unto you all (Right Honourable and most dearly beloved in our Lord) that those words, *2 Pet. 1. 12, 13, 14, 15.* sound much in mine ears, and do sometimes work upon my heart

The Epistle Dedicatory.

heart, if so I may in some measure follow the example of that blessed Apostle who wrote them, *wherefore (saith he) I will not be negligent to put you alwayes in remembrance of those things, though ye know them, and be established in the present Truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance. Knowing, that ere long (or, not knowing how soon) I must put off this tabernacle. Moreover, I will endeavour, that you may be able after my decease, to have these things alwayes in remembrance. Now, it is the Lord alone who blesteth the endeavours of His Servants, and giveth increase both to our planting and watering. To whose rich and saving grace I commend your Honours most heartily, and shall ever pray for all manner of blessings on you and all your rising posterity, as is the duty of,*

*Your Honours obliged Servant, who
beggeth grace to approve himself
your faithfull Pastor,*


JAMES FERGUSSON.

To



To the Reader.

Christian Reader,

 Do here present thee with an Exposition of two of Paul's Epistles after the pattern (so far as my Weaknesse could reach) held forth by these two Reverend Brethren, Mr. David Dickson, and Mr. George Hutcheson, in their late Pieces of this kind upon other parcels of holy Scripture.

The Reasons of my undertaking (besides what is held forth in the former Epistle) Were not any confidence I had to come up to my copie, wherein I doubt not, but, as I my self am very conscious, so, the intelligent Reader Will easily perceive that I come far short, and that the superstructure by me is much unanswerable, as to fulnesse of purpose, accuracie and stile of language to the foundation laid by them: But, first, an apprehension I had, that as the compleating of such a work as this upon the whole Scripture, is much wished-for by many, and would prove acceptable and profitable to the Church of Christ; So, many of greater abilities and finesse than I for such a task, who did lie-by, might be strongly induced to contribute their endeavours towards it, if any essay of mine should be accepted, wherein, I blesse the Lord, I have not been in a mistake, as may appear by what is sent abroad to the World since the publishing of my former Piece, by a Reverend Brother,

To the Reader.

ther my nearest fellow-labourer in the Work of the Ministry, upon the two Epistles of PETER. And, secondly, I was one of those, Who, some ten years ago, Without my knowledge, were pitched upon by some Reverend Brethren of the Ministry for carrying-on this Work: at which time, I almost perfected the Whole task then allotted for me; but, through some sad accident in those times of trouble, all the Papers I had written upon that subject, were destroyed and lost, and so a great part of my time and life in a manner lost with them: Which, notwithstanding, did not so discourage me, but the remembrance of What sweetnesse I tasted in that study, and of the manifold advantage wherewith it did recompense my pains, did make me full seven years after more easie to be wrought upon and perswaded by the earnest desires of others to make a new essay, as being confident from former experience, I my self at least should be no loser by it.

If any shall think this present Piece to be of greater length than my former, and some others of this kind are, I hope they will (for satisfaction) consider, that seeing the Apostle doth discusse a great and needfull controversie in the Epistle to the Galatians, it requireth time and enlargement to find and follow the threed of an intricate dispute; and to explain those excellent Truths, which the Apostle doth so much labour to assert. And as for the Epistle to the Ephesians, it is Well known to be so comprehensive (as containing the whole substance of Christian Religion in so little bulk) that hardly can any man (at least not I) satisfy either himself, or his Reader, Without enlarging himself
some;

To the Reader.

somewhat in opening up such a rich treasure and excellent subject.

I know there may be much coincidencie of Doctrines, which do nativly arise from those Epistles and from those others to the Philippians and Colossians; But, the Reader may, for his satisfaction, consider that (besides I have frequently referred him to those places, where such Doctrines were formerly raised) seeing the Spirit of God hath thought it necessary to assert necessary truths ofner than once, in severall Scriptures, for our further confirmation, it should not be thought an idle repetition in a Writer to draw out the same conclusions from the same truths when they occur: for, hereby is given a proof of the sufficiency and fruitfulness of Scripture, as furnishing many arguments to establish one and the same necessary truth; To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe, saith our Apostle, Philip. 3. 1.

I trust it shall not offend, that in some places I do not only hold forth the doctrine and conclusion, which flow naturally from the text; but also couch in some explanations, cautions, reasons, and sometimes some short uses; for, those serve to obviate mistakes about the truth in hand, and to leave some impression of it upon the heart and affections.

If any take exception that Scriptures are too frequently cited, and think they are hereby retarded from making progresse in reading the treatise, They may be pleased to consider, that I cite no Scriptures to confirm the Doctrines themselves, which, as I conceive, are sufficiently grounded upon, and confirmed from the text, but only the cautions rea-
sons

To the Reader.

sons and uses of those Doctrines, which not being grounded upon the present Scripture, I desired none to take off my hand upon trust. However, if any understand the purpose to be truth, and grounded upon Scripture, he needeth not stand to seek the particular passage, which is brought to prove it, except he please and judge it convenient, that he may have some further ground of meditation upon the truth in hand thereby afforded.

And now, beloved Christians, let me exhort you all, and especially you to Whom the Lord hath carved out such a lot in things Worldly that ye have abundance of time and leasure from your other employments, Give more of your time to the searching of Scripture, and labour to understand the mind of God concerning your Salvation revealed therein. Hereby shall you be preserved from being led aside by Satans emissaries, who do erre, not knowing the Scriptures, Maith. 22. 29. Hereby ye shall be made wise unto Salvation, and rendered victorious over your strongest lusts, and thoroughly fitted for the most difficult duties, While the Lord by His Spirit shall make the Scriptures profitable unto you for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and thereby make you perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, 2 Tim 3. 16, 17. Only in order to the gaining of those rich advantages by reading Scripture, ye would read, not superficially, but conscientiously, attentively, and devoutly; and do not slight to take what helps ye can get from the Labours of others for attaining to the increase of solid knowledge and sanctifying grace.

What

To the Reader.

What humane frailties you discern in this piece of mine (which doubtlesse are not a few) pitie them and so much the more pray for me that I may discern and amend them : and if any will be so faithfull and free as to adverteise me either immediately, or by causing others to acquaint me with them, I shall (God willing) be humbly thankfull, and endeavour to make the best use I can of their freedom, knowing that such reproofs will not break my head, but be as a precious ointment. The great and gracious God blesse all your endeavours for advancing your selves and your relations in knowledge and grace. So prayeth,

Kilwinning,
Nov. 12.
1658.

Your servant in the Lord,
JAMES FERGUSSON.

ERRATA.

ERRATA.

Page,	Line,	Read.
6	11	subscribe
10	24	5.
13	28	had deserted
18	28	their
20	7	believing
21	6	their
24	15	delete to
36	9	wickedness
37	15	32.
39	16	22.
40	23	went not up
52	5	our
53	23	acquired
54	28	2.

Page,	Line	Read.
61	24	composing
ibid	35	9. 19.
84	13	delete who
102	10	affections
131	10	inflicted
136	24	worth
163	20	doth succeed
166	3	ver. 7.
171	7	17.
180	12	us sons
239	23	11.
283	11	may have
298	23	15.
315	7	sin and

A brief Exposition of the Epistle of *Paul* to the *Galatians*.

The A R G U M E N T.

PAUL, having planted several Churches in Galatia (Act. 16. 6. and 18. 23.) a region of Asia the lesse; and being now, as it seemeth, a prisoner at Rome, (chap. 6. 17.) some false Apostles had seduced these Churches from the sincere doctrine of the Gospel preached by Paul, chap. 1. 6. perswading them that the observation of the Levitical Ceremonies, now abolished, was necessary, chap. 6. 13. and that justification and salvation were partly from faith in Christ, and partly also from their own works, chap. 3. 2. and 4. 21. and that Paul was no lawful Apostle, no wayes to be compared with the other Apostles who had seen Christ in the flesh, (as may be gathered from chap. 2. 6, 9.) and therefore his doctrine was but false. Upon which occasion, the Apostle writeth unto them this Epistle: wherein his scope, is, to convince those Galatians of their Errors; to reduce them to the right way; to confirm them in the Truth, and to presse upon them the duties of an holy life, chap. 3. and 4, &c. which he laboureth to effectuate (after prefacing, to ver. 6. chap. 1.) First, by asserting the truth of the Gospel preached by him, and the Authority of his own Apostleship, to ver. 15. of chap. 2. Secondly, by vindicating the true doctrine of justification by faith, and of the temporary use and abrogation of the Levitical Law, and of the whole legal dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, to the end of chap. 4. Thirdly, by instructing them in the right use of Christian Liberty, having exhorted them to stand to it, and pointing out, and pressing upon them the exercise of several Christian Vertues, to ver. 11. of chap. 6. From whence he concludeth the Epistle, to the end of chap. 6.

B

CHAP.

C H A P. I.

IN the first part of this Chapter, is the preface to the whole Epistle, containing the party who did write it, ver. 1, 2--- the party to whom it was written, ver. ---2. the salutation, ver. 3. a description of Jesus Christ from the work of Redemption, ver. 4. and a thanksgiving to God for this work, ver. 5.

In the second part, he reproveth the *Galatians* for their defection from the Gospel, ver. 6. to Errors, which did overturn it, ver. 7.

In the third part, that he may justifie this reproof, he asserteth the divine authority of the Gospel preached by him, First, by cursing those who should hold out another Gospel, differing from it, ver. 8, 9. Secondly, from the scope of his doctrine, and his aim in preaching it, ver. 10. Thirdly, because both the first saving knowledge which he had of the Gospel, and his office to preach it, were immediatly from God, and not from men, whether Apostles or any other, ver. 11, 12. whereof he giveth several evidences; As first, that ever untill the instant of his conversion, he was a learned, but persecuting Pharisee, ver. 13, 14. Secondly, that being miraculously converted and called, he went presently with no small pains and hazard to discharge his Apostolick Office, without instruction or authority received from any Apostle, ver. 15, 16, 17. Thirdly, that after three years he went to *Peter*, but not to be informed by him, or to receive ordination from him, or from any other Apostle, ver. 18, 19. The truth of all which history he confirmeth by an oath, ver. 20. Fourthly, that he preached as an Apostle in *Syria* and *Cilicia*, with the approbation of the Christian Jews, whom formerly he had persecuted, ver. 21, 22, 23, 24.

Vers.

Verf. 1. *PAUL an Apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead,*

2. *And all the Brethren which are with me, unto the Churches of Galatia.*

IN these two Verses is the Inscription of the Epistle, holding forth, 1. Who did write it, to wit, *Paul*, described from his Office, and his Call to that Office, which were both wholly divine, as being immediately from God, ver. 1. *And the Brethren with him*; such were eminent Professors, but especially publick Preachers, who then were with *Paul*, and did give their testimony to those Truths contained in this Epistle, though they were not the immediate Pen-men of the holy Ghost in it, as *Paul* was. 2. To whom the Epistle was written, ver. 2. From ver. 1. *Learn*, 1. Free-grace doth often light upon the most unworthy, not only by giving grace and salvation to themselves, but also making them sometimes instrumental for the Kingdom of Christ, and for bringing about the salvation of others: for, *Paul*, once a wicked persecutor, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13-- is now made an eminent Apostle; *Paul an Apostle*. 2. Faithful and called Ministers of Jesus Christ, are to be so far from cowardly ceding, or heartlesse fainting under the bold, bitter and unjust aspersions of those who would labour to question their Calling, and thereby weaken their Authority, and render the truth of their Doctrine doubtful, *Mat.* 21. 23. that they ought so much the more, for the credit of their Office, *Rom.* 11. 13. and for the Truth's sake which they preach, 1 *Cor.* 7. 25. avow their Calling against all, who do question it. Thus *Paul*, writing to these *Galatians* amongst whom, by means of the false Apostles, his Authority was questioned more than in any other Church, (chap. 2. 6, 9, &c.) expresseth himself more largely in avowing his Call to the Apostolick Office, than in any other Epistle: not only affirming that he

was called by Jesus Christ, and God the Father; but also denying that he was an *Apostle of men*, or, *by man*.

3. The Apostolick Office had this common to it with all other Church-offices, whether ordinary, or extraordinary, *Eph. 4. 11.* that it was not the invention of man, or founded upon authority meerly humane, but was instituted by Jesus Christ, to whom only it appertaineth to appoint Office-bearers in His House, *1 Cor. 12. 28.* for which respect, *Paul* affirmeth he was an *Apostle not of man*, as the Ambassadors and Officers of Princes and States are: Ministers are Ambassadors for Christ, representing Him, and having their Authority from Him, *2 Cor. 5. 20.* 4. The Office of an Apostle had this peculiar unto it self, that the designation of the person to undergo that Office, was not mediately by the election and suffrages of men, as it is in the calling of ordinary Office-bearers, *Act. 14. 23.* but immediately from God; so that the Function of the Apostles ceased with them, and did not passe by succession to a Pope or any other: for, in this respect, *Paul* affirmeth he was an *Apostle, not by man*, to wit, meer man, *but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father.* He was called immediately by God, *Act. 9. 15. Doct. 5.* That Jesus Christ is not meer man but God also, appeareth from this, that the Apostle here opposeth Christ to man, and so He behoved to be more than man: and this was not an Angel, *Heb. 2. 16.* and therefore He was also God; *Neither by man* (saith he) to wit, meer man, *but by Jesus Christ.* 6. When Scripture ascribeth an action to the Father, the first Person of the blessed Trinity, as done by Him, it is not to be so understood, as if the Son and holy Ghost were excluded from having hand in that action; but that they are rather included in the Father, as persons of the same Godhead: for, the calling of the Ministers of the Gospel, which is ascribed to God the Father, is ascribed to the holy Ghost, *Act. 20. 28.* and *Paul*, who is here said to be called by God the Father, is by the holy Ghost separated and sent forth unto a particular imployment in his Calling, *Act.*

13. 2, 4. and the raising of Christ from the dead in like manner ascribed to God the Father here, is ascribed to Christ also; *Job.* 10. 18. and to the holy Ghost, *Rom.* 8. 11. And God the Father, who raised Him from the dead. All the external actions of the Godhead towards the creatures, are common to the whole Trinity, *Job.* 5. 19. So that the ascribing of some actions to the Father, is not, as if any of the rest were not concurring, But because of the order of working, which is among the Three Persons; the Father being the first fountain of working, as doing all things from Himself (*1 Cor.* 8. 6.) by the Son (*1 Cor.* 8. 6.) and holy Ghost, *1 Cor.* 12. 6, 8. because of this order, those actions which are common to the whole Trinity, are frequently ascribed unto the Father. 7. As Jesus Christ who hath life in Himself, *Job.* 5. 26. and is the fountain of life unto others, (*Job.* 6. 33.) was once among the dead; so He was raised again by the power of the Father from death unto life, and is alive for evermore, Amen, *Rev.* 1. 18. it being impossible that He should be holden by death, *Act.* 2. 24. and Divine Justice having received full satisfaction from Him for all which He undertook to do or suffer, as our Cautigner, *Job.* 16. 10. Who raised Him from the dead, saith he. 8. So blinded are men usually with preposterous zeal towards their erroneous opinions, that frequently they do alleage those things for to uphold them, which of all other things are most contrary unto them: Thus the false Apostles, that they might shake the Truth preached by Paul, and establish their own contrary Error, did alleage that he was no lawful Apostle, as for other reasons, so it would seem mainly for this, Because he had not seen Christ in the flesh, *1 Cor.* 9. 1. nor yet was called before His death; and that therefore his Doctrine was not to be much regarded: Which reason Paul doth here refuse, by shewing he was called by Christ, after He was raised from the dead, and had taken possession of His glorious Kingdom; leaving unto them to gather, that therefore his Calling had at least no lesse dignity and glory in it than

if he had been called by Christ when He was here upon the Earth in the dayes of His flesh; And God the Father, who raised Him from the dead.

From vers. 2. *Learn.* 1. The moe they are whom God maketh use of to hold out the beauty of Truth and Holinesse unto us, that we may imbrace and follow it; or, the deformity and danger of Error and Vice, that we may fly from, hate, and abhor it. We are the more to take heed how we reject or imbrace, dispise or obey what is so pressed upon us; as knowing there will be the moe to bear witness of our guilt, and ~~feel~~ to the equity of God's judgment against us, if we obey not, *Luke 9. 5.* for, *Paul* doch joyn the consent of all the Brethren who were with him, unto what he writeth; that so his Doctrine and Reproofs might have the more weight; And all the Brethren which are with me. 2. Though the sins of a Church, whether in Doctrine or Manners, are not to be reputed as no sins by us, because they are connived at, or pleaded for by a Church, *Jer. 5. 31.* and though the sins of Churches are to be pleaded against by private Christians in their places and stations, *Hos. 2. 2.* So far are they to be from following of a multitude to do evil, *Exod. 23. 2.* Yet we are not so to stumble at the many sinful failings; yea, grosse enormities, which may be in Churches, relating either to Faith or Manners, as presently to unchurch them, by denying them to be a Church, or to separate from them, by refusing to keep communion with them in lawful and commanded Ordinances, being purely administrated according to the prescript of God's Word, chiefly if their Error be not contrary to fundamental Truths, or at least if they erre of humane frailty, and not obstinately or avowedly: for, the Churches of *Galatia* had made a grievous revolt, even from a fundamental Truth, ver. 6. and chap. 3. 1. and yet because they were rather through frailty seduced by others, than active seducers of others, therefore he useth much meeknesse and moderation towards them, allowing them the name of *Churches*, and exercising his

Apostolick care towards them as a part of his charge, and thereby keeping communion with them, as with Churches which were sickly and under cure; *Unto the Churches of Galatia*: which Truth makes nothing against our separation from the Church of Rome, as being after much pains taken in order to their reclaiming, and not untill we were driven to it by persecution; besides that the Romish Church had erred in the foundation obstinately, and avowedly.

Verf. 3. *Grace be to you and peace, from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.*

HERE is the Salutation, wherein he wisheth unto them God's gracious favour and good-will, whereby He is well-pleased with the Elect in, and for Christ, *Rom. 3. 24.* and Peace, that is, first, Peace of conscience, and with God, *Rom. 5. 1.* Secondly, peace with the creatures, as with the Angels, *Col. 1. 20.* with the Godly, *Isa. 11. 9.* with our selves, all within us being conform to the rule of the renewed mind, *Rom. 8. -1.* and in some respect with our enemies, *Prov. 16. 7.* and with the beasts of the field, *Hos. 2. 18.* Thirdly, Prosperity and good successe, *Psal. 122. 7.* All which he seeketh from God the Father as the fountain of Grace, and from Jesus Christ as the conduit or pipe to convey Grace from the Father unto us, *Job. 1. 16.* *Doct. 1.* God's gracious favour and good-will is to be sought by us in the first place, whether for our selves (*Psal. 4. 6.*) or others: that being a most discriminating mercy betwixt the Godly and the wicked, *Ephes. 1. 6.* and a mercy which of any other bringeth manifest mercies alongst with it, *Psal. 84. 11.* Yea, all things are mercy to a man, who hath obtained that mercy, *Rom. 8. 28.* for, the Apostle wisheth for Grace unto them first; *Grace and peace.* 2. Peace also is to be sought, even Peace with God, Peace with the creatures, together with prosperity and good successe; but withall, Peace is to be sought after Grace, and not to

be expected before it. Peace without Grace, is no Peace: there can be no peace with God, no sanctified peace with the creatures, nor sanctified prosperity or successe to our undertakings, except through Jesus Christ we lay hold on God's favour and grace; Yea, there is *no peace to the wicked, saith my God, Isa. 57. 21.* Thus the Apostle wisheth unto them also *Peace*, but so as it flow from *Grace*; *Grace and Peace.* 3. Grace and Peace are such, as we cannot acquire unto our selves by our own industry or pains: they come from God, are to be sought from Him, and His blessing is more to be depended upon for attaining of any thing, which cometh under the compassse of Grace and Peace, than our own wisdom, industry or diligence; So Paul seeketh *Grace and Peace from God the Father.* 4. Whatever favour we seek from God, we are to seek it also from Jesus Christ as Mediator: for, He hath purchased it, *Eph. 1. 7.* He is appointed Lord of His own purchase to bestow all. *Act. 5. 31.* and there is no coming to, or trysting with the Father; but in Him, *Joh. 14. 6.* Thus Paul seeketh *Grace and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ.* 5. They to whom Grace and Peace belong, are such as acknowledge Christ for their Lord to command and rule them, and do yeeld subjection to Him in their heart and life: for, while the Apostle wisheth Grace and Peace to them, he doth lead them to thoughts of Christ's Sovereignty, he himself taking Him up as Lord, and holding Him forth so unto others; *From our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Vers. 4. Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God, and our Father.

THE Apostle (having but mentioned Christ, ver. 3: that he may in the very entry draw the minds of these *Galatians* from off their errors and superstitions to imbrace Him, as one in whom is fulnesse of sufficiency for the redemption and justification of lost sinners) doth de-

describe Him from one eminent action of His, whereby, as the great High-priest over the House of God, *Heb.* 10. 21. He did offer up Himself, Soul (*Isa.* 55. 10--) and Body (*Heb.* 2. 14.) by death upon the Crosse, *Joh.* 19. 17, 18. that He might expiate and take away (*Joh.* 1. 29.) the sins of the Elect, *Joh.* 17. 9. and that hereby He might deliver them from this *present evil world*, or from the sin, misery and cruelty of wicked men in the world, who get the name of *world*, 1 *Joh.* 5. 19. and all this He did in obedience to His Father's will, who had fore-ordained this to be the only way of bringing lost sinners to Heaven, *Heb.* 10. 8, 9. *Doct.* 1. The lively impression of Christ's worth and excellency, doth ordinarily so fill the hearts of those, who know Him, and have tasted how gracious He is, as there will be a readinesse, upon any occasion of mentioning Him, to break-forth in His commendation: for, such is the constraining power of love on *Paul's* heart, that usually he doth not so much as make mention of Him, but presently he must extoll, and at large commend Him; so doth he in this verse, *Who gave himself, &c.* which his attainment, should be our aim; and his practice, our copie, 1 *Cor.* 11. 1. 2. The well-grounded knowledge of what Christ is to us, and hath done for us, together with the frequent remembrance of it, is a soveraign Antidote against all those Errors and Superstitions, which tend to draw us from Christ, either in part, or in whole; and that, both to prevent them, and to purge us from them: He is that Sun of righteousness, *Mal.* 4. 2. the arising whereof doth easily dispel and scatter all those fogs and mists, *Act.* 19. 18, 19, 20. for, *Paul*, in order to this end, doth in the very entry hold forth what Christ had done for them; *Who gave himself, &c.* saith he. 3. So deep and deadly was the guilt of sin, *Gal.* 13. 10. So exact was the justice of God, and so unalterable was His faithfulness in executing the judgment, which was denounced for sin, (*Gen.* 2. 17.) that there was no delivery to the Elect from it, without the payment of a ransom and satisfaction for the wrong done

done by sin to the provoked justice of God : for, *Christ gave himself for our sins*, that is, a propitiation for them, *1 Joh. 2. 2.* and to cleanse us from them, *1 Joh. 1. 7. 4.* Nothing lesse could be a satisfying ransom to the Father's justice, than the offering-up of Jesus Christ, the holy, harmlesse and spotlesse Lamb of God, both in Soul and Body, as a Sacrifice, by death upon the Crosse. The wrong was infinit, *Gen. 39. -9.* and so must the price be, even no lesse than the Bloud of God, *Act. 20. 28.* *Who gave himself for our sins.* 5. Such was the desire which Jesus Christ had to the salvation of lost sinners, *Prov. 8. 31.* such was His care to perform what He had undertaken to the Father, and what was fore-told of Him in Scripture, (*Psal. 40. 7, 8.*) that willingly, and of His own accord, without any constraint, except that of love, (*Joh. 15. 13.*) He did offer up himself a Sacrifice to satisfie provoked justice : for, *He gave himself for our sins*, saith *Paul.* 6. They for whom Christ did give Himself upon the Crosse, are also delivered by Him from this present evil world : which Christ doth not by taking them presently out of this world by death, or otherwise, *Joh. 17. 15.* But, first, by renewing their natures, and so separating them from the condition of unregenerate men, who are called *the world*, *1 Joh. 15. 19.* And, secondly, by guarding them against those baits and snares of sinfull temptations, which are mainly prevalent in the men of this world, *1 Joh. 2. 16.* Thirdly, by defending them, so far as He seeth conducing for His own glory, (*Psal. 76. 10.*) and their good (*Psal. 84. --11.*) from the malicious cruelty of wicked men of this world, *Psal. 105. 14.* And, lastly, by taking them at the close of their time (*2 Cor. 5. 1.*) from Earth to Heaven, that they may be for ever with Himself, *1 Joh. 14. 3.* for, *He gave himself, that He might deliver us from this present world.* Doct. 7. So much do wickednesse and wicked men abound in the world, *Gen. 6. 5.* so many are the snares and temptations to sin and wickednesse, which are in it, *1 Joh. 2. 16.* so many also are the crosses and calamities, which godly men

men may resolve to meet with while they are in the world, *Psal. 34. 19.* that though the world simply in it self, and as it speaketh our duration and abode in this life, all the dayes of our appointed time, be not evil, but distinguished from evil, *Iob. 17. 15.* Yet for those causes, and in those respects, the present world is *an evil world*; for so it is here called. 8. That any of lost mankind, in whom by nature sin doth reign, should have their natures renewed, the power of sin in them mortified, and so themselves delivered from this present evil world, it was necessary that Christ should offer up Himself: for, as life eternal, so also God's Image and Holiness was forfeited by *Adam's* fall unto all his posterity, *1 Cor. 15. 21.* and so behoved to be purchased by Christ's death before ever we could attain unto it, *Heb. 9. 14.* for, saith the Apostle, *He gave himself, that we might be delivered from this present evil world.* 9. This evil world, wherein so much wickednesse, so much misery, and so many wicked men abound, is but *present*, not lasting; transient, not continuing; it is hastening to its end, *Rom. 8. 19.* and at last shall be consumed with fire, *2 Pet. 3. 10.* and a new World, new Heavens, and a new Earth, are to succeed unto it, wherein shall dwell righteousness, *2 Pet. 3. 13.* for, he calleth this a *present world*, importing that there is another to come. 10. That Jesus Christ did offer up Himself in satisfaction to provoked Justice for the sins of the Elect, was a thing decreed and appointed by the Father, which, as it speaketh the Fathers unspeakable love unto lost sinners, *Iob. 3. 16.* so it sheweth the ground whereupon the satisfaction given by Christ, is accepted for those, who by faith lay hold on Him, *Iob. 6. 39. 40.* it was so transacted betwixt the Father and the Son, even that He should *give himself for our sins, according to the will of God*, to wit, the Father: for, when God is opposed to Christ, then God signifieth the Father; Yet so, as the other two Persons of the Godhead are not excluded, as is noted upon *Ver. 1. Doct. 6.* 11. By reason of this satisfaction given by Jesus Christ to provoked justice

justice for our *sins*, God, who was before a consuming fire to sinners, *Heb.* 12. 29. a strict sin-pursuing Judge, *Exod.* 34. 7. becometh now our Father : for, justice being satisfied, and that satisfaction laid hold upon by faith, *Rom.* 5. 1. the enmity ceaseth, and we become children; yea, heirs and joynt-heirs with Christ, having received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, *Abba, Father*, *Rom.* 8. 15, 16, 17. This is imported, while it is said, *According to the will of God, and our Father.*

Verf. 5. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Here is the close of the Salutation : in which, by holding forth his own practice for an example, he comprehendeth the duty of the Redeemed: they are to ascribe lasting glory and praise to God the Father for His goodwill to this work of our Redemption by Jesus Christ. *Doct.* 1. As God, in this great work of our Redemption by Jesus Christ, hath made the glory of almost all His Attributes, especially of His Justice, as to Christ, *Rom.* 8. 32. of His Mercy, as to us, *Eph.* 1. 7. and consequently of His infinit Wisdom (*1 Tim.* 1. 17.) to kyth and shine forth : So it's the duty of the Redeemed, and such a duty as useth willingly to flow from the very making mention of that so excellent a Work, in a heart duely affected with the worth thereof, even to acknowledge that glory of His which is manifested therein, and to wish that His glory may be set forth more and more, both by our selves and others ; and this not only by speaking to the commendation of His Glory and Greatnesse, *Psal.* 145. 5, 6. but by making our whole life and conversation to be nothing else, but a testimony of our thankfulness to Him, *2 Cor.* 5. 15. for, the Apostle, having mentioned that great Work, ascribeth glory to God, as God's due, and his own duty ; *To whom be glory.* 2. This duty of ascribing glory to God for the great and excellent work of our Redemption, is such, that it can never be sufficiently discharged : there is no lesse required than
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a succession of Ages to Ages ; yea, and Eternities leisure to ascribe glory to God : for, so much is imported, while he saith, *To whom be Glory for ever and ever.* 3. The Glory of the Redeemer, and of God who sent His Son to do that Work, shall be the long-lasting and never-ending song of the Redeemed-ones through millions of imaginable ages, even to all eternity : so much doth the word, rendered *for ever and ever*, bear : for, it signifieth to ages of ages, or innumerable ages. 4. Our praise and thanksgiving to God, must not be formal or verbal only, *Mat. 15. 8.* but ought to be fervent and serious, as proceeding from the most intimate affection of the heart, (*Luk. 1. 46, 47.*) signified by the word, *Amen*, that is, *Let it be so* ; an earnest wish.

Verf. 6. *I marvel, that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel.*

IN the second part of the Chapter, that the Apostle may reclaim those *Galatians* from their Errors, he falleth upon them with a sad, though most gentle, reproof ; wherein, by way of admiration at their unconstancy, he chargeth them with the sin of suffering themselves to be so easily and so soon seduced by their false Teachers from the Truth, which they had once imbraced : whereof he mentioneth three dangerous consequences, first, That hereby they had made defection from God, who called them ; and consequently were ungratefull, as walking unworthy of their heavenly calling, *Eph. 4. 1.* Secondly, That herein they had the doctrine of Free-grace through Jesus Christ, without which they could not be saved, *Eph. 2. 8.* And, thirdly, They had imbraced another Gospel and way of Salvation, held forth by the false Apostles, concerning which he declareth his judgment in the following Verse. *Doct. 1.* It is the duty of Christ's Ministers, not only to hold out the pure and sincere truth of the Gospel unto the People of their Charge, *Act. 20. 27.* But also to defend it, by convincing of gainsayers, and
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by reprov^{ing} those sadly, who are carried away with contrary errors : for, so doth the Apostle here reprove those Galatians, *I marvel, that ye are so soon removed.*

2. The Ministers of Jesus Christ, are in all their reproofs, chiefly against such who are carried away with the spirit of error, and are not incorrigible in their error, to use much moderation and meeknesse, eschewing all sharpnesse of speech, at least until pains be taken to inform their judgment ; and this, lest the evil which they intend to cure, be otherwise made worse : for, although *Paul* intend afterwards, chap. 3. ver. 1. (having once confirmed his Doctrine from Scripture) to rebuke them most sharply ; yet he doth not here, at the first entry, in an upbraiding way, shame them, but using much moderation and meeknesse, with admiration and grief, maketh mention of their levity unto them ; and this, because many of them at least were not yet incorrigible, chap. 5. 10. *I marvel, &c.* saith he.

3. They are also in all their reproofs, to use much warinesse and circumspection, not omitting any circumstance which may justly extenuate the sin reprov^{ed}, or furnish with any ground of hope concerning the amendment of him who is reprov^{ed} : for, hereby the bitter potion of a medicinal reproof is much sweetned, & the guilty patient allured to the more thorow-receiving of it: *Paul* useth this circumspection, while he saith, not ye of your selves do remove to another Gospel, but ye are removed, passively ; thereby laying the chief part of the blame upon others ; and while he speaketh of them in the present time, not that they were already removed, but as being in the act of removing, so that their case was not desperate ; *I marvel, that ye are removed* : In the Original, it is a word of the present time.

4. The most quick-sighted of Christ's Ministers, may be much deceived and disappointed in their expectation of good things from some eminent Professors (for, in charity they are obliged to hope the best of all, 1 Cor. 13. 7. in whom the contrary doth not appear, Tit. 1. 16.) and so may readily fall short of their hope

hope, as Paul sheweth he did, while he saith, *I marvel, that ye are removed*; importing, that their defection had fallen forth beyond his expectation; for, at such things men use to marvel, *Mark 15. 44. Doct. 5.* The Servants of Jesus Christ, are not, under the pretence of warinesse and circumspection in reprovng, to omit any circumstance, which may deservedly aggrege the sin reprov'd, whereby the guilt may be charged home with greater weight upon the sinners conscience, *2 Sam. 12. 7.* prudence and faithful freedom may well consist, *Mat. 10. 16.* Thus Paul heapeth together several things, whereby their apostasie was aggregated, as that it was sudden, a turning from God, and to another Gospel; *I marvel that ye are so soon removed, &c.* 6. How great need have they who stand, to take heed lest they fall, *1 Cor. 10. 12.* seeing such is mans inconstancy, especially in the matter of Religion; that they who are flourishing Professors of saving Truths now, may upon a sudden, and with very little ado, be carried away to soul-destroying Errors before it be long: for, such were those Errors, unto which the Galatians were removed, chap. 5. 2. and that *so soon*, either after their first conversion, or after the time when they were first assaulted by the false Apostles, which doth not militate against the doctrine of perseverance, seeing Paul speaketh to the whole visible Church, among whom some had never saving grace; and for the few truly gracious, which were among them, there is nothing here to prove that their falling away was either total or final. 7. This aggregeth the sin of any person not a little, when he doth suddenly without difficulty or resistance, and with ease succumbe and yeeld unto the temptation: for, hereby is their defection aggregated, even that they were *so soon removed*; they did not long resist the temptation. 8. Though active seducers of others from Truth, be more inexcusable than simple creatures that are seduced by them, *Rom. 16. 18.* Yet, even those of the latter sort, are not altogether free of guilt: when the blind do lead the blind, both fall together in the ditch: for,

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herein were these Galatians guilty, that they did suffer themselves to be seduced, or, *so soon removed from Him that called them.* 9. As the dangerous consequences which follow upon Error, ought to be presented unto People, that thereby they may be made the more to flie from it ; So there are some Errors in Doctrine, which do no lesse separate the person erring from God and interest in free-grace, than profanity of life doth : of which Errors, this is one, the maintaining of Justification by works : for, *Paul sheweth that by this Error they were removed from God, who had called them, and from the grace of Christ.* 10. As the inward effectual calling of sinners from the state of nature unto grace, is the work of God, which He bringeth about by the preaching of His Word, *1 Cor. 1. 21.* Yea, and the external calling of men from Idols, to be Members of the visible Church, which is attended with professed subjection upon his part, who is called, unto God's Laws and Ordinances, is his work also, though in an inferiour degree and respect : So it is no small aggravation of sin or error in any person, when it is evidently inconsistent with, or reflecting upon, that state, unto which he is called : for, *Paul describeth God here, as elswhere, chap. 5. 8. from His calling of them, and chooseth to describe Him so, while he is speaking of their defection ; that hereby he may aggregate it, as reflecting so much upon their calling ; From Him that called you.* 11. The Gospel is a Doctrine which holdeth forth much of Christ's free-grace and good-will to sinners, and specially in this, that Heaven and Salvation, though purchased at a dear rate by Christ, *Job. 3. 16.* is notwithstanding freely offered unto all, *Rev. 22. 17.* and really to be bestowed upon all who do but come to Him, *Job. 5. 40.* and by saving-faith lay hold upon Him, *Iob. 3. 36.* for, God's calling them to receive the Doctrine of the Gospel, is here termed *His calling them unto the grace of Christ.* 12. It is ordinary for Seducers, and those that are acted by a seducing spirit, to usher-in their Errors by some excellent

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designations, as of New-Lights, a more pure Gospel-way, and what not? as here they design their Error, by the name of another Gospel; and this doubtlesse, as they would have had the people believe, a more excellent Gospel than what *Paul* had preached: for, *Paul* in imitation of the false Apostles, calleth their Errors *Another Gospel*.

Verf. 7. *Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ.*

THe Apostle taketh away that excellent title from the error of the false Apostles, whereby themselves did design it, and denieth it to be a Gospel at all; yea, and to be any other thing but the invention of men, whereby they troubled the Churches peace, and laboured to overturn and corrupt the doctrine of the Gospel. *Doct. 1.* It is the part of Christ's Ministers to undeceive a seduced People, by taking off the vail of fair pretences, wherewith Error useth to be covered, and so made the more taking, and to set it forth in its vilest colours, that People may loath it: for, *Paul* doth take the name of Gospel from this error, declaring it to be nothing else but a perverting of the Gospel; *Which is not another.* 2. There is but one Gospel, one in number, and no more; and but one way to Salvation held out in the Gospel, which is by Faith laying hold upon the righteousness of Christ, *Job. 3. 16.* Whatever doctrine holdeth forth any other way to Salvation than this, it is no Gospel, no glad-tidings of Salvation, but a perverting of the Gospel: for, so doth *Paul* affirm of the doctrine taught by the false Apostles; *Which is not another, &c.* 3. The proper effect of Error, is, to trouble the Churches peace; first, their outward peace among themselves, the patrons of Error being zealous of nothing so much as to gain many followers, *Mat. 23. 15.* for attaining whereof, they scruple not much to make wofull rents and deplorable schismes within the Church, *Rom. 16. 17.* Secondly, their inward peace of

conscience, while some are thereby rendred first perplexed, and anxious what to choose or what to refuse, and at last are made to question all Truth, *1 Cor. 15. 32.* and others to imbrace Error for Truth, and so to ground their peace upon an unsure foundation, which can give no solid peace, no not in the mean time; and whatever false peace is thereby offered, it will afterwards end in trouble, *Jude 13.* Hence it is said here of the false Apostles by *Paul*, *There be some that trouble you*, to wit, by their Errors. The Scripture-use of the word, is, mainly to signifie inward trouble, anxiety, fear and perplexity of mind, *Mat. 2. 3.* and *14. 26.* The word seemeth to be borrowed from the troubling of waters, *Job. 5. 4, 7.* which usually cometh to passe by great winds, *Jona. 1. 7.* and applied to the troubling of the Galatians by the winds of erroneous doctrine, *Eph. 4. 14. Doct. 4.* Then is usually the design of Satan, and of his instruments, against Truth, most dangerous, and so most to be watched against and feared, *Mat. 7. 15.* when they speak fairest and endeavour to palliate their Errors with specious pretences: for here, when they pretend to no lesse than the holding out of a more excellent Gospel than *Paul's*, ver. 6. they endeavour even to *pervert* and overturn the Gospel of Christ. 5. However people, who are in hazard of seduction, or already seduced unto Error, are to be tendered, and by all means fervently to be laboured with, in order to their confirmation or recovery, *Jude 22, 23.* Yet these obdured Leaders and desperate Seducers, are not much to be taken notice of: *Paul* thinketh such unworthy, whom he should once name; *But there be some that trouble you.* 6. The Doctrine which maintaineth that Justification and Salvation are obtained partly by Christ, and partly by the merit of good works, is a perverting and total overturning of the Gospel, in so far as it contradicteth the main scope of the Gospel, which is to hold out and exalt Christ as our compleat Saviour, Mediator, and Ransom, and not in part only, *Eph. 2. 7, 8, 9. 1 Job. 1. 7.* Hence the false Apostles, while they

they presse justification by works, as appeareth from the tenour of the following dispute, are said to pervert the Gospel of Christ.

Verf. 8. *But though we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*

IN the third part of the Chapter, the Apostle, that he may justifie his former reproof, asserteth the Divine Authority of that Gospel, which he had preached unto them. And first, by denouncing the terrible curse of eternal separation from Christ against those who should corrupt that Doctrine by preaching another way of Salvation differing from it. The certainty of which denunciation he confirmeth from the supposition of an impossible case, That if either he himself, or the other Apostles with him, Yea, or if an Angel from Heaven should teach otherwise, they were not to be exempted from this curse; and therefore much lesse should there be exemption for others. *Dock. 1.* The written Word of God, without the help of unwritten traditions, containeth in it all Truths necessary for bringing about the salvation of those who yeeld themselves to be instructed by it: for, the written Word comprehendeth the sum and substance of all that Paul preached or believed, *Act. 24. 14.* and no Doctrine, differing from what he had preached, was to be taught under the hazard of a curse, which could not be, except he had preached all necessary Truths; *Let him be accursed, saith he, who preacheth any other Gospel.*

2. Whatever Doctrine is propounded unto the Church, as a part of God's Word and necessary to Salvation, if it be diverse and differing from, or besides the written Word, though it be not directly contrary unto it, it is a cursed Doctrine, and the Authors thereof accursed: The Ambassador who speaketh any thing beside his Commission, is as well in a fault, as he who speaketh the contrary, though not so much: for, saith the Apostle, *If*

we preach unto you any other Doctrine than that (the word signifieth besides that we have preached unto you) let us be accursed. 3. So assured ought Ministers to be of the truth of what they hold forth as the way to life and salvation, that nothing imaginable, no not the authority of an Angel from Heaven may prevail to brangle them in their leaving of it; yea, and that knowingly and with confidence they may be able to denounce the curse of God against those who would dare to hold out another way of Salvation contrary unto it: for, so doth *Paul*; *If an Angel preach besides what we have preached, let him be accursed.* 4. The Ministers of Jesus Christ ought to be faithfull unto the souls of those over whom they are set, by declaring the whole Counsel of God unto them, *Act. 20. 27.* and keeping up no Truth necessary for Salvation from them: for, *Paul* was thus faithful to the Galatians, else he could not denounce those accursed who would preach any thing, to wit, as necessary to Salvation, even *besides that which he had preached unto them*, as he doth here. 5. So much of glory to God's Justice and Mercy is manifested in the Doctrine of the Gospel, *Eph. 1. 6, 7, 12.* the keeping of this Doctrine pure and uncorrupt is so necessary for the salvation of sinners, *1 Tim. 4. 16.* the perverting of this Doctrine by adding any thing of mans inventions to it, is so dishonourable to God, whose wisdom is hereby taxed as defective; so destructive to the Doctrine of the Gospel it self, ver. 7. and so perniciously poisonable to the souls of People (*Act. 15. 24.*) that they who are guilty of this sin, and labour to seduce others to imbrace their pernicious Errors, are liable to the terrible curse of eternal separation from Christ, and ought to be pronounced such judicially by the Church, *Tit. 3. 10. Let him be accursed*, or, *Let him be Anathema*, which was one kind of that dreadfull sentence of Excommunication, as it was used with the Jews; and the word signifieth that which is put apart from the use of man, and dedicated unto God, with the accursing of them who should convert it to their own use; and so, by a translated sense, it signifieth

signifieth eternal separation from Christ, *Rom. 9.3. 1 Cor. 16. 21. Doct. 6.* The more impartial the Ministers of Christ be in reprovng of sin, and denouncing of threatnings against all without exception, who are guilty of the sin threatned, the word of reproof and threatning will have the more weight from his mouth; and when the Word is dispensed with evident respect to persons, so that the faults of some are sharply rebuked, when the sins of others equally guilty for by-respects are wholly connived at, usually no person careth for it: therefore, *Paul*, that the judgment denounced may have the more weight with others, exempteth not himself, if so he should be found guilty of the sin against which he threatneth, *Though (saith he) even I Paul, or any other of the Apostles, preach any other Doctrine, &c.* 7. As people, when they discern any excellencies or perfections, whether in gifts or graces in Ministers, are ready to take upon trust whatever they deliver; so nothing of that kind should make faith to what they preach, if it be not founded upon the Word of Truth: the first of these is supposed, the other more directly expressed, while he saith, *If we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Doctrine, let him be accursed.* 8. The Authority of the Gospel and written Word, is far above the Authority of the most trust-worthy Men; yea, and of the glorified Angels, So that neither Man nor Angel, Church or any other, can adde any Authority to it, as though without the testimony of those it had not sufficient Authority in it self, (*2 Pet. 1. 19.*) and from God the Author of it, *2 Tim. 3. 16.* to give faith unto it; neither can they detract any thing from its Authority, though they should all in one voice contradict it, as it appeareth from this impossible case, supposed by the Apostle; *Though we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel, let him be accursed.*

Verſ. 9. *As we ſaid before, ſo ſay I now again, If any man preach any other Goſpel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accuſed.*

THat the Apoſtle may ſhew what he ſpoke, proceeded neither from rage nor raſhneſſe; he doth again denounce the former terrible curſe more generally againſt all whomſoever guilty of the forementioned ſin. *Doct. 1.* Such is the incapacity of mens minds to underſtand the things of God. *Eph. 4. 18.* the imbecillity and weakneſſe of their memories to retain and carefully keep, *Heb. 2. 1.* Yea, ſuch is the deadneſſe, ſlowneſſe and averſneſſe of the will and affections from imbracing and giving entertainment to ſaving Truths at firſt when they are offered, *Zech. 7. 11.* that weighty and neceſſary Truths are not only once but frequently to be inculcated by faithful Miniſters, eſpecially fundamental Truths, *Philip. 3. 1.* and of daily uſe and practice, *2 Pet. 1. 12.* which frequent inculcating of one and the ſame thing, muſt flow not from lazineſſe, occaſioning vain and idle repetitions condemned, *Mat. 6. 7.* but from the zeal of God, reſpect to, and compaſſion of, the peoples neceſſity: for, *Paul* doth inculcate and again repeat this neceſſary and fundamental Truth, that the Doctrine of the Apoſtles, and by conſequence their Writings, (*1 Joh. 1. 1.*) have Divine Authority, and are thoroughly ſufficient to Salvation, without any mixture of humane Traditions added to them; *As I ſaid before, ſo ſay I now again.* 2. Though zeal for God and Truth, with fervency in the delivery of Truth, chiefly in the reproof of ſin (*Iſa. 58. 1.*) be required in a Miniſter; yet he is carefully to guard, leſt, under pretence of zeal, he vent his inconfiderate and fleſhly paſſions, or, leſt he give any ground for people to conceive ſo of him: for, *Paul* guardeth againſt this, by repeating adviſedly what he had preſently ſpoken; *As I ſaid before, ſo ſay I now again.* 3. It is not enough for the Salvation of peoples ſouls, to have the Goſpel preached in purity among

among them, except it be also received by them, as labouring to understand the purpose of it, *Act. 8. 30.* giving assent unto the truth of it in their understanding, *Heb. 4. 2.* and imbracing the good things offered by it in their heart and affections, *1 Tim. 1. 15.* for, whereas (ver. 8.) Paul said they are accursed who teach otherwise than he had preached, here he saith, *they are accursed who preach otherwise than they had received*: whereby it appeareth, as Paul had preached the Gospel of Christ, so the Galatians received it, to wit, the whole bulk of Church-members come to age, the two first wayes mentioned in the Doctrine, and sincere Believers among them in the last way.

Verf. 10. *For, do I now perswade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for, if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.*

HERE is a second Argument, proving the Divine Authority of the Gospel, which Paul had preached to those Galatians, taken partly, from the scope of his Doctrine, which was not to *perswade men*, that is (by a necessary Ellipsis and a construction somewhat unusual) he did not by his Doctrine perswade men to be heard and obeyed (as the false Apostles, who did alwayes inculcate the Authority of men upon the hearers, that hereby they might gain credit to their Doctrine;) but the drift of his Doctrine was to draw men to God, *perswading God*, that is, to be heard and obeyed; that so the faith of the hearers might rely only upon the Authority of God, and not of men; partly, from the scope of the preacher, Paul himself, which was not to hunt after the favour of men, (as the false Apostles did presse the Legal Ceremonies, that they might hereby gain the applause of, and decline persecution from, the Jews, *Gal. 6. 12.*) but his aim was, singly to approve himself to God, however men should esteem of him, *1 Cor. 4. 3.* and withall, giveth a reason inducing him to be thus single and sincere, to wit. if he

should set himself to hunt after the favour of men, as he did when he was a Pharisee, he could not be an approved Servant of Christ, but of those whose favour he studied to gain. *Doct. 1.* The faithfull Servants of Jesus Christ, beside their many other sufferings, must resolve to suffer somewhat sometimes in their credit and estimation from those, who, being set on by a spirit of spight and malice, will spread sinistrous reports in secret of honest Ministers, the truth whereof they dare not avow or publicly stand to, when they are put to it, and have fair opportunity to do it if they could: for, it appeareth *Paul's* adversaries had been secretly whispering, as if the scope of his Doctrine had been to set up his own Authority and Testimony in the Points controverted, not only above the other Apostles, to whom they falsely boasted of to have favoured them (as is collected from chap. 2. 6.) but also above the Authority of God speaking in the Old Testament, and that he was not constant to himself, sometimes disproving Circumcision, and sometimes approving it, chap. 5. 11. as he might best please the humours of men with whom he had to do: and *Paul* wipeth off these calumnies, not by a positive denial of any Truth to be in them, but by interrogations and questions; which, as they serve for strong negations of the things questioned, according to the use of Scripture, 1 *Sam.* 12. 3. So they in a manner provoke the adversary to assert the thing questioned for truth, if he be able: for, *do I now persuade men, or God? or, do I seek to please men?* 2. Though the Minister of Jesus Christ may make use of humane Authority as a secondary proof and testimony unto the Truth, already proved to be Truth from the Word of God, and chiefly towards those with whom the testimony of such will have most weight, *Act.* 17. 28, Yet the Authority and Writings of men, or of any man whatsoever, are not to be rested upon as the first and main proof of any religious Truth: neither are they, especially in preaching, to be alwayes inculcated and promiscuously unto every sort of hearers; lest thereby the
faith

faith of people be brought to rely on the Authority of men : for, this is to *perswade men*, to wit, to be chiefly heard, as the supream Judges of religious Truths, which *Paul* denieth to have been his practice; *Do I now perswade men?* 3. That Doctrine only, the truth whereof is grounded upon Divine Testimony, and *Thus saith the Lord*, is to be received in the Church, as that which men may safely venture their eternal well-being on, *1 Cor.* 3: 12, 15. and which God will own for His, *Act.* 15. 24. for, *Paul* proveth that the Doctrine preached by him was the only true Gospel of Jesus Christ, because thereby he did *perswade God*, to wit, to be heard and obeyed, and His Authority only to be stood to, as appeareth by the causal particle *for*; *For do I now perswade men, or God?* The first part of the question hath the force of a denial; the second of a vehement affirmation; as if he had said, I do not perswade men, but God. 4. It is not enough that a Minister preach nothing to people, but that which is the Truth of God; he must also preach Truth sincerely, not concealing any part of necessary Truth, or misapplying Truth so, as that thereby he may please the sinfull affections, humours and dispositions of men, but aiming singly to approve himself to God in doing of his duty, *2 Cor.* 2. 17. Thus *Paul* denieth that his aim in preaching, was to please men; *Or do I seek to please men?* 5. As true conversion doth work a real change in a man from what he once was in his unconverted state, *2 Cor.* 5. 17. so particularly in this, that where before he did prostitute his gifts and parts; yea, his very conscience to the slavery of mens sinfull humours whom he conversed with, and by pleasing of whom he did expect any profit, credit or contentment, *Job.* 5. 44. he will not now abase himself, or dishonour God by doing so any more: thus was it with *Paul*; *For if I yet pleased men*; where he insinuateth that formerly, and while he was a Pharisee, he did please men, but he would do so no more. 6. Though the Minister of Jesus Christ, ought not to set himself of purpose, and without necessity to displease men, or, by his

his imprudent disobliging carriage to irritate and stir up their corruptions; (for hereby the Word in his mouth should be made unflavory unto them) and though he ought to endeavour the pleasing of all men, by eschewing any thing which may be just ground of offence to them, *2 Cor. 7. 2.* by retrenching or enlarging himself in the use of his christian liberty in things indifferent, as he may be least offensive unto them, *1 Cor. 10. 32, 33.* and as he may gain most upon them, *1 Cor. 9. 20, 21, 22.* and by accommodating himself in his publick preaching to the case, capacity and state of all, by assigning unto every one what is competent, *1 Job. 2. 12, 13.* and so is to please men for their good to edification, *Rom. 15. 2.* Yet, there is a way of pleasing men, most sinfull and base, especially in a Minister, and which is inconsistent with fidelity in Christ's service, to wit, when he concealeth any necessary Truth, which he is otherwise called to deliver; lest he displease men, *1 King. 22. 13, 14.* when his highest aim is to gain applause from men, *2 Cor. 4. 5.* and generally when he is so timorously disposed, as to venture rather upon the displeasure of God, by omitting any part of His duty, than to irritate and displease the sinfull humours of men, by faithfulness in the discharge of his Calling, *Act. 4. 10.* A Minister who setteth himself so to please men, and who resolveth not in these respects to meet with the displeasure of some men, cannot be a faithful Servant to Jesus Christ; for, a man cannot serve two masters, *Mat. 6. 24.* *If I yet pleased men, I should not be the Servant of Christ.* 7. A faithfull Servant of Jesus Christ, will prize his acceptation with Christ, his being approved of Him, and the testimony of a good conscience for fidelity in His Service, more, than all the favour, countenance, applause, or any advantage flowing from these, which he can receive from men; and before he hazard the losse of the former, he will rather a thousand times embrace with gladnesse the most certain losse of the latter: for, *Paul* maketh this an argument, why he did not seek to please men; because that

that hereby he should lose the approbation of Christ: For, if I yet pleasea men, I should not be the Servants of Christ.

Verf. 11. But I certifie you, Brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me, is not after man.

12. For I neither receivea it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

THE Apostle addeth a third Argument, to prove the Divinity of that Gospel which he had preached, whereby he asserteth also his own lawfull Call to be an Apostle, which was questioned by his adversaries, affirming (as it appeareth from his so much insisting to demonstrate the contrary from ver. 13. chap. 1. to ver. 15. chap. 2.) that he was no Apostle, but some ordinary Preacher, who had received the Doctrine of the Gospel at the second hand only, and having so received it, had now himself corrupted it, contrary to what was taught by the other Apostles, James and Cephas, of whose Authority and Patrocinie his adversaries did falsely boast, whereby they created a prejudice in the minds of those Galatians, both against Paul's person, and his doctrine, which he wipeth off, while he prosecuteth this Argument at large. And, in the first place, he propoundeth the Argument as a thing known, at least which could not be contradicted, to wit, that the Gospel preached by him was not after man, ver. 11. that is, as he explaineth presently, he neither received it of man, or, he received not his Office to teach and preach the Gospel from any meer man, and so was no ordinary Preacher; Neither was he taught it by man, that is, the knowledge which he had of the Gospel, was not by any ordinary mean or instruction from men, and so he had it not at the second hand, but it was immediately revealed to him by Jesus Christ; and therefore behoved to be divine, ver. 12. Doct. 1. It is the part of a faithful and prudent Minister by loving and affectionate insinuations to bear himself in upon the affections of people, even though deeply prejudicate against

against him, so long as there is any hope of gaining them: for, thus doth *Paul* to these Galatians, while he calleth them *Brethren*. 2. It is the usual custom of Hereticks and adversaries of Truth, when they have nothing to say in reason against the Doctrine it self, to cast reproach upon the persons of those who preach it, and especially to question their Call and Authority to preach; that so they may indirectly at least reflect upon the Doctrine which they preach. So do the Papists now against the Ministers of the Reformed Churches, and so did the false Apostles then against *Paul*, as we cleared in giving the sense of the words, and appeareth from his asserting his Call to be an Apostle; *It is not after men, neither received I it from man*. 3. When subtil wits do thus puzzle the People of God by such diversions from the main purpose, and by Arguments which do not directly strike at the Truth in question; it is nevertheless the part of Christs able and faithfull Ministers, to take off those indirect prejudices, by shewing how groundlesse they are; and particularly they are not only to clear the truth of the Doctrine, but also their own Call from God to preach that Doctrine: for, so doth *Paul* here, and to the end of the Chapter; *Now I certifie you, Brethren, &c.* 4. As none may take upon him to dispense the Word of God publickly unto others, without a lawful Call from God to do it, *Rom. 10. 15*. So there are several sorts of callings, one, of men, and ordinary, when God calleth by the voices and consent of men, following the Laws of the Word, *2 Tim. 2. 2*. another of God, and extraordinary, when He doth call immediately, the Call of the Church not intervening, *Joh. 10. 21*. for, *Paul* doth not preach untill he receive the Office to preach, and this *not of man*, in the ordinary way; and so of God extraordinarily; *For neither received I it of man*, saith he. 5. They who are to teach others, are first to be taught themselves, to wit, ordinary Preachers by ordinary means, whereby they may be enabled by sound Doctrine both to exhort and convince gainsayers, *Tit. 1. 9*. The Priests lips should keep

keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth, *Mal. 2. 7.* for, as Paul received an Office to preach the Gospel; so he was taught and instructed in the Gospel; *I neither received it, neither was taught it, but by revelation.* 6. It was required to the Office of an Apostle, that the person called to it, should have the infallible knowledge of the truth of the Gospel, and this not wholly by the help of humane means, as we do now learn knowledge at Schools of Learning, and by our own private study, but also and mainly by immediate inspiration from the Spirit of God: for, Paul sheweth that the Gospel was not taught him of man; and this he saith not to depreſſe humane learning, and the knowledge of divine Myſteries, which we attain unto by the help of Learned-men, and of their Writings, this being the ordinary way of attaining knowledge now, *1 Tim. 4. 13. 2 Tim. 2. 2.* but, that hereby he may obviate the calumny of his adverſaries, who alleaged he had the knowledge of the Gospel by ordinary instruction from men only, and ſo was no Apoſtle; *Neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*, that is, it was immediately revealed unto him by Chriſt. 7. And this that Chriſt is oppoſed unto man, doth point at His Deity. See *Verſ. 1. Doct. 5.*

Verſ. 13. For ye have heard of my converſation in time paſt, in the Jews Religion, how that beyond measure I perſecuted the Church of God, and waſted it:

14. And profited in the Jews Religion above many my equals in mine own Nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

BECAUSE the Argument preſently mentioned, is moſt weighty, therefore the Apoſtle doth at large proſecute it, and giveth, in this Chapter, four Evidences of the truth of what he aſſerted in it, to wit, That neither the knowledge which he had of the Gospel was from humane perſwaſion, or by ordinary means; nor yet his Call to preach the Gospel was from the ſuffrage of men,
or

or any Authority conveyed by man ; but both of them were immediately from God. The first Evidence, relating mainly to the first branch of the Assertion, is, The hostile mind which he carried against the Christian Church, while he was a Pharisee, *Act. 26. 5.* in persecuting and making havock of it, ver. 13. together with the great measure of knowledge he had in that Religion which he did then professe, and of abilities to defend it beyond many of these who were equal in age with him, and his zeal and fervour for his Religion, and the worst part of it, to wit, unwritten Traditions received from their fathers, without any ground in the written Word of God, *Mat. 15. 3. 9.* All which he speaketh as of a thing publickly known, ver. 14. leaving them to gather hence, that his so sudden change, from being so zealous, so deeply engaged, and every way so able a persecutor, to imbrace the Christian Religion, could not flow from humane perswasion, or any ordinary means, but immediately from God. *Dock. 1.* It is a matter of no small difficulty ; yea, and in an ordinary way almost impossible for a man, deeply engaged in a course of error, having kythed active for it, and endued with ability to defend it, to be reclaimed from his error, to imbrace the way of Truth : for, *Paul* maketh his so deep engagements to the Pharisaical Errors, an evidence that his sudden change to Christianity did not flow from any ordinary mean, but was wrought immediately by God ; *For ye have heard, &c.* 2. A sincere Convert will not shun to make an open and ingenuous confession of his wicked life, not omitting any thing which may tend to the just aggravation of it : and this not in a boasting or a rejoicing manner, *Jam. 4. 16.* but that hereby the freedom of God's grace may be commended, *1 Tim. 1. 13, 14.* and that other vile sinners, in their own eyes lost, may have encouragement from God's dealing with him to believe on Christ for life everlasting, *1 Tim. 1. 16.* and that God's honour one way or other may be thereby brought about : for, *Paul* doth ingenuously confesse here, that *in time past*
be

he had persecuted the Church of God extremely, and wasted it; that he may thereby make evident that his conversion flowed from the immediate and extraordinary work of God, and so stop the mouth of those who were adversaries to Truth. 3. That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were endited by the Spirit of God, and that the Pen-men thereof were not acted with humane policy, but immediately inspired by that unerring Spirit, appeareth from this, joyntly with other evidences held forth in Scripture it self, that they concealed not their own faulcs, but blazed them to the world when the glory of God did so require, as Paul doth here; *Beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God*, saith he. 4. This open and ingenuos confession of our bypast wicked life, is to be extended only unto sins already known, that hereby the publick offence may be removed; but not to the making notour of such evils as have been kept secret from the knowledge of others, the divulging whereof would but multiply scandals and stumbling-blocks, *Rom. 2. 14.* for, Paul confesseth only what they had already heard; *Ye have heard of my conversation in time past.* 5. There is no particular Church on earth, though never so famous for, and orthodox in, the point of Religion, who may not so far degenerate from what they once were, as that Religion both for Doctrine and Worship may be wholly corrupt, from which those, who would be saved, must deliver themselves quickly, and which God will not own for His, as not being prescribed by Him, but will father it on those who do professe it, as their Religion, and as invented by them: thus the Jews, once right in the point of Religion, *Hos. 11. 12.* had now, in Paul's time, so far corrupted Religion in the doctrine of Justification, *Rom. 10. 3.* of the Trinity, *Job. 8. 9.* of Manners, or of the Moral Law, as if it required nothing but external obedience, (*Mat. 5, 6, 7.* chapters) in asserting the authority of unwritten Traditions, and in worshipping God according to those, *Mat. 15. 3, 9.* and rejecting Jesus Christ the promised Messias, *1 Thess. 2. 15.*
that

that *Paul* seeth a necessity to quit that Religion, calling it *theirs*, not *God's*; *My conversation in times past in the Jews Religion.* 6. Crosses, afflictions and persecutions from wicked men, are the ordinary lot of *God's Church and People*: and this by reason of that enmity which is betwixt the seed of the Woman, and the seed of the Serpent, *Gen. 3. 15.* together with *Satan's* malice against the Church, *Gen. 3. - 15.* and his prevalent power over wicked men, whereby he inciteth and draweth them on by such inducements, as he knoweth will be most prevalent with the different tempers of those who are acted by him, *Job. 12. 6.* compared with *Mat. 26. 15.* to be executioners of that his rage and malice, *Rev. 20. 7, 8.* and because of *God's* tolerance and permission, that thereby His Church may be tried, (*Rev. 2. 10.*) every one, whether good or bad, being made to appear what really they are, *Dan. 11. 32.* and that by the sufferings of His People the way of Truth may be made more lovely, further spread, and more imbraced by others, *Act. 8. 4, 5, 6, &c.* and that they may be also corrected for their bypast sins, as abused peace and prosperity, *Judg. 10. 6, 7.* and that hereby also they may be restrained from many sins in time coming, *Isa. 27. 9.* and this either by removing the opportunity of such sins through the rod, *Hos. 2. 6.* or by renewing the hearts of many through sanctifying grace, a greater measure whereof is bestowed usually by God upon His People under persecution and affliction (*Hos. 2. 14, 15.*) than at another time: thus, *Paul persecuted the Church of God extremely.* 7. Though the Church of God, as to the inward estate thereof, which standeth in Election and the fruits of saving Grace flowing therefrom, cannot be utterly wasted, *Job. 10. 28, 29:* neither can the outward state of the visible Church be so far decayed, as that the visible Church should altogether cease to be, at least in all places, *Mat. 16. - 18.* Yet the Lord may so far give way to the rage of persecutors, for the reasons mentioned in the former Doctrine, as that thereby the outward face and beauty of the visible Church

Church shall be totally marred, the Members thereof being partly killed, *Joh. 16. 2.* partly scattered, *Act. 8. 3. 4.* the publick Ordinances of divine Worship being altogether for a time suppressed, and the publick Assemblies of the Church interrupted, *Dan. 11. 31.* Thus *Paul wasted the Church*: the word signifieth the vastation of Lands, burning of Houses, and utter depopulation of Countries, which use to be accomplished by an enraged prevalent enemy; *I wasted it. 8.* The Church of God may expect to meet with persecution and sufferings, not only from men avowedly wicked and openly flagitious, but also from others, whose carriage is smooth, free from scandal, and in all things, according to that false way of Religion which they professe, blamelesse: Satan laboureth most to have such engaged, and such being once engaged, are most bitter and implacable persecutors, as having some respect to conscience in other things, and being acted in this from the principles of a deluded conscience, *Joh. 16. 2.* which of all other ties, doth most strictly bind, and most effectually drive forward to fulfill its dictates, especially in things of religious concernment, *Act. 13. 50.* for, *Paul, who profited in the Jews Religion above his equals, and was exceedingly zealous, did persecute the Church. 9.* The life and way of some who are engaged in a false Religion, may be so blamelesse, and, according to the dictates of their deluded conscience, so strict, as that it may be a copie unto those, who professe the true Religion, and a reproof to many such for their palpable negligence: so was *Paul's* way, while he was a Pharisee, even such, as may serve for a copie unto Christians to walk by in several things, as first, to be active in spreading the true Religion in our places and stations, and bearing down of contrary Errors, as he was in persecuting the Christian Church; because it was opposite to the Jewish Religion professed by him. Secondly, that what we do in Religion, or for God, we do it not negligently, but with all our might, *Ecc. 9. 10.* and to the uttermost of what our power can reach, as he

did persecute the Church, not lazily, but above measure, or extreame. Thirdly, that we labour to profit, advance and grow in Religion, both as to the knowledge of Truth contained in it, *Heb. 6. 1.* and practise according to those Truths, *2 Pet. 1. 5.* as he profited in the Jewish Religion. Fourthly, that in the matter of growth, there be an holy emulation and strife with others; that we may outstrip them, as he profited above many of his equals. Fifthly, that we be zealous for our Religion, as having love to it, and to the honouring of God whether by our selves or others according to it, *Act. 15. 3.* together with grief and anger when God is dishonoured and Religion wronged, *Job. 2. 15, 16, 17.* as Paul was zealous of the Traditions of his fathers: for, zeal hath in it a mixture of love and anger. *Doct. 10.* As love to the honour of God may engage a man sometimes to speak to his own commendation; So there would be that modesty and sobriety of spirit, as it may appear he doth not speak from arrogancy or pride, and that he seeketh not his own commendation in speaking: for, Paul commendeth his own diligence and abilities, that thereby he may commend Free-grace, which delivered him out of that state, but with great modesty: for, he saith not, *he profited more than all, but more than many;* and not, *more than his superiours, but, more than his equals,* to wit, for time and age, and those not in all the world, but of his own nation. *11.* As our affections of joy, love, hatred, anger and grief, are by nature so corrupt (*Eph. 2. 3.*) that even the choicest of them, if they be not brought in subjection to the Word by the Spirit of God, will lay forth themselves rather upon forbidden and unlawfull objects, than that which is warrantable and commanded by the Lord: So our zeal and fervency of spirit in particular, will bend it self more toward the maintenance of Error, than of Truth: for, Error is the birth of our own invention, *Gal. 5. 20.* and hath the rise from some unmortified lust within, which it doth gratifie, (*2 Tim. 4. 3.*) so is not Truth: Thus Paul sheweth that his zeal tended more

more to maintain that part of the Jewish Religion, which was unwarrantable, to wit, the unwritten Traditions, than all the rest of it; And was much more zealous of the Traditions of my fathers, saith he.

Vers. 15. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mothers womb, and called me by his grace,

16. To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood;

17. Neither went I up to Jerusalem, to them which were Apostles before me, but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

HERE is a second Evidence of the truth of what he formerly asserted, ver. 11. and 12. to wit, that as God in His providence had been making way, both in Pauls birth and education, for that which He had purposed to imploy him in; so when it pleased God at the time of his gracious and effectual calling, ver. 15. to make Christ, and the doctrine of Redemption by Christ, known unto him by extraordinary and immediate revelation, Act. 9. 4. that as an Apostle, immediately called by God, ver. 1. he might publish the knowledge of Christ among the Gentiles; he was so much perswaded of his immediate Call from God, that he did not debate the matter neither with himself nor others, who might have dissuaded him from giving obedience to it, ver. 16. but immediately went about the discharging of his Apostolick Office, not without great hazard and pains to himself, in Arabia and Damascus, without so much as once visiting any of the Apostles, ver. 17. far lesse went he to be instructed in the knowledge of the Gospel by them, or to receive Ordination unto the Ministerial Office from them, as his adversaries did falsely alleage of him, the falsehood whereof he is here making evident.

From Vers. 15. Learn, 1. Such is the power of Gods good pleasure, whereby He doth whatsoever He willeth.

in Heaven and Earth, (*Pf. 135.6.*) that the will of man, though never so deeply engaged in the course of sin and wickednesse, cannot resist it, but most willingly doth yeeld unto it, whenever the Lord thinketh fit to let forth that His good pleasure in its gracious and powerfull effects of drawing a sinner out of Nature to the state of Grace, as it appeareth from the adversative particle, *But*, whereby the Apostle opposeth Gods pleasure to his own former ~~weaknesse~~, as prevailing over it; *But when it pleased God, &c.* 2. The fountain-cause of man's salvation, and of all things tending to it, especially of his effectual calling, and of that, whereby he is made first to differ from another, is, God's good-pleasure, and nothing present (*Eph. 2.1.*) or foreseen to be (*Rom. 9.11.*) in the person, who is called: for, the Apostle ascribeth all of that kind in himself, to the pleasure of God; *But when it pleased God to reveal His Son in me.* 3. The disposing of events, or of things which shall fall out, together with the time when they shall fall out, are wholly ordered by God's will and pleasure: for, this pleasure of His, circumscribeth even the time of *Paul's* calling; *But when it pleased God, then*, and neither sooner nor later, *was Christ revealed to him.* 4. The Lord, by His working in us, and particular acts of providence towards us, is often making way for some hid design and purpose of His about us, which for the time we are ignorant of, but when it appeareth by the event, a wonderfull contexture of providences making way for it, and tending to it, is also manifested with it: Thus *the Lord had separated Paul from the mothers womb, to preach the Gospel among the Gentiles*; whereby is meant, that God was without Paul's knowledge, preparing him for that Office, by His providence about him from his very birth, as, that he was born of such parents, with such a bodily temper, fitted, as it would appear, to endure much travel and hardships, that he was educated at the feet of *Gamaliel*, that he was a Pharisee, instructed in all humane and divine learning according to the Law, &c. 5. The effectual calling of
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wicked

the Elect in time, whereby they are drawn to Jesus Christ, *Joh. 6. 44.* and inabled to imbrace Him as He is offered, *1 Tim. 1. 15.* their minds being savingly illuminated, *Act. 26. 18.* and their wills renewed, *Ezek. 36. 26.* is, the work of God's almighty Power and Grace; in the first instant of which work, man doth only receive the impression from Grace, and hath no active influence in it, *Eph. 2. 5.* This doth Paul assert, while he saith, *God called me by His Grace.*

From *Verf. 16. Learn, 1.* However man, by the light of Nature, *Rom. 2. 14, 15.* and by the works of Creation (*Rom. 1. 19, 20.*) and Providence, (*Psal. 19. 1.*) may attain to know there is a God, and that this God should be served, (*Act. 17. 23.*) and will be terrible to those who serve Him not (*Rom. 1. 23.*) Yet the knowledge of Jesus Christ the Son of God, and of Redemption purchased to lost sinners through Him, is a thing which the greatest Wits, by the fore-mentioned helps, cannot reach, except it be revealed unto them, either by an ordinary or extraordinary revelation: for, even Paul had this knowledge by revelation; *It pleased God to reveal His Son in me.*
 2. As there is an ordinary way of revealing Christ to souls, to wit, by the Word preached, (*Rom. 10. 17.*) and God's blessing upon the Word, *1 Cor. 3. 7.* so there is another extraordinary, without the Word preached, whether by voice, instinct or apparition: This latter way was Christ revealed to Paul, as appeareth not only from the history of his conversion, *Act. 9.* and 22. chapters, but also from the expression here used, *to reveal His Son*, not, *to*, but, *in me*; whereby, as some conceive, is signified, that the grace and knowledge of Christ did from Heaven immediately break-in upon his soul.
 3. The knowledge of Jesus Christ, which Ministers especially do receive from God, is not only for themselves, but that it may be communicated by them unto others: So that the Lord doth bestow the more liberally upon them for His Peoples sake, *2 Cor. 1. 4.* Thus, *God revealed His Son in Paul, that he might preach Him among*

the Heathen. 4. Though before Christ's coming in the flesh, the doctrine of Salvation was by God's appointment confined in narrow bounds, *Psal.* 147. 19, 20. Yet by Christ's death, the partition-wall was removed, and the division which was betwixt the Jews and the Gentiles, quite abolished, *Eph.* 2. 13. so that the doctrine of Salvation was to be spread among the Heathen; and this, that the Prophecies of the calling of the Gentiles might be fulfilled, *Psal.* 2. 8. *Isa.* 2. 2. *That I should preach Him among the Gentiles*, saith Paul. 5. The Call of God, whether to amendment and newnesse of life, or to undergo any lawfull Office, especially an Office in His House, it being once known to be His Call, ought not to be shifted, but immediately and without delay obeyed, *Heb.* 3. 7, 8. because our life is uncertain, *Jam.* 4. 14. we know not if we shall again get such an offer, *Act.* 13. 46. or, though we get a new offer, yet the longer we delay, there will be the greater indisposition to imbrace it, *Jer.* 13. 23. for, this made Paul immediately to follow the Call of God; *Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.* 6. Because flesh and blood (whether thereby be meant carnal men, friends or any other, or our own carnal and natural reason) will furnish abundance of seeming reasons, either for questioning the reality of God's Call, or for not obeying, or at least for postponing obedience to His Call; chiefly when obedience to it doth carry hazard, losse, or probability of discredit with it, *Mat.* 16. 22. Therefore, in the things of God, and in the matter of obedience to the will of God, we are not to consult with flesh and blood, but once knowing what the will of God is, we are without deliberation, whether we shall obey or not, to put it in execution, committing all our cares and fears about the issue to God, *Eph.* 4. 16. for, Paul *conferred not with flesh and blood*: the word signifieth to lay down our cares and difficulties, as a burden, in some friends bosom; but he looked not on flesh and blood as a friend to be advised with in the present case.

From

From Vers. 17. *Learn, 1.* That extraordinary way of revelation, whereby the Lord made known His mind to the Penmen of Scripture, was so infallible in it self, and so evident to those unto whom it came, to be no delusion, but the very mind of God, that they were above all doubt to the contrary, and needed not so much as to advise with the best of men in order to their thorough-confirmation about the realitie of it : for, *Paul* was so perswaded of his immediate Call from God to be an Apostle, and of the infallible truth of the Gospel, which was revealed unto him, that he did not consult with the very Apostles about it ; *Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me*, to wit, that he might consult with them, and obtain a Permission or Commission from them to discharge his Office ; otherwise it is probable, from *Act. 22. 17.* that *Paul* shortly after his conversion went to *Jerusalem*, going through it in his way to *Arabia*, but went not at that time to any of the Apostles, being discharged by God to stay any longer there. 2. There may be more ground of hope to bring the most wild and barbarous savages to the saving knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, than a people outwardly civilized living under the drop of Ordinances, and thereby inured to a form of godlinesse without the power thereof : for, *Paul* being commanded to make hast out of *Jerusalem* (there being no hopes that his Testimony would be received there, *Act. 22. 18.*) is sent to the wicked and savage *Arabians* ; *But I went to Arabia*. 3. The Lord maketh sometimes the first piece of publick service, which He putteth His Ministers upon, as hazardous, uncouth, and unsuccessful-like as any wherein He doth ever imploy them afterwards ; that hereby they may be taught to depend more on God's blessing, than upon any humane probabilities for successe to their pains, *2 Cor. 1. 9.* and that they may give proof of the sincerity of their obedience to the Call of God, when no apparent hazard will make them repent their undertakings, *Jer. 17. 16.* and withall that they may, in the first entry, receive

a proof of God's fidelity in bearing them through all hazards, which they may meet with in following of His Call, 2 Cor. 1. 10. Thus was it with *Moses*, *Exod.* 2. 10, &c. so was it with *Jeremiah*, *Jer.* 1. 19. and so here with *Paul*, whose first work, after God had called him to be an Apostle, was to preach the Gospel among the wicked and savage Arabians; *I went to Arabia.* 4. The Apostles by their Office, were not fixed or tied unto any certain Charge, as ordinary Ministers now are, *Rev.* 2. 1, 8. but their Charge being the whole World, *Mat.* 28. 19. they went from place to place, as the necessities of People required, (*Rom.* 1. 11.) rules of Providence (*Rom.* 15. 20.) or God by His Spirit did immediatly direct, *Act.* 16. 9, 10. Thus *Paul* went unto *Arabia*, and returned again to *Damascus*, near to which he was converted, *Act.* 9. 3. at which time of his return, did fall out that hazard, wherein he was, from the Jews, mentioned *Act.* 9. 23 &c. for, the history sheweth, it was many dayes after his conversion, and that immediately after his delivery from it, he went to *Jerusalem* and conversed familiarly with the Apostles, and therefore it could not have been before his journey to *Arabia*, else that history should contradict *Paul* himself, affirming here, *that he went up to Jerusalem to them who were Apostles before him.* A

Verf. 18. *Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem, to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen dayes.*

19. *But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's Brother.*

HERE is a third Evidence, to wit, that three years after his conversion he went to *Jerusalem*, to give a familiar, serious and friendly visit to *Peter*, in token of mutual consent and agreement to one and the self-same Truth, which was preached by them both, but not that he might learn the knowledge of the Gospel from *Peter*, as his adversaries alleaged: for, his abode with *Peter*, was but for fifteen dayes only, *ver.* 18. And lest any should object, that

that he had been taught at that time by some other Apostle, he sheweth he saw no other Apostle there but *James*, and that he did see him only, as it were, upon the by: which *James*, was not the son of *Zebedeus*, who was beheaded by *Herod*, *Act.* 12. 2. but the son of *Alpheus*, *Mat.* 10. 3. who either himself, or his wife, hath been of kinred with *Mary* the mother of *Jesus*. Hence *James* their son is here called the *Lord's Brother*, according to the custom of the Hebrews, who called men of the same kinred and blood, *Brethren*, *Gen.* 13. 8. *Doct.* 1. That nothing of *Peter's* supposed supremacy over *Paul* and the rest of the Apostles can be gathered from this place, as the Papists do alleage, appeareth from this, that *Paul* went first to his Work before he came to *Peter* at all, and that his businesse with *Peter*, was not to receive ordination from him, or to evidence his subjection to him, but from the respect and reverence he carried to him, to give him a friendly visit; Besides that, it is the Apostle's scope in a great part of this Epistle, to shew that he was nothing inferiour to *Peter*, or to any other of the Apostles. 2. We ought so to spend our time for diligence and faithfulness in our stations, that we may be able to give a good account how time hath been spent both for dayes and years: *Paul* giveth such an account, while he sheweth he preached three years in *Arabia* and *Damascus*, and after stayed in *Jerusalem* fifteen dayes; *Then after three years I went up and abode fifteen dayes.* 3. It ought to be the endeavour of Christ's Ministers to entertain love and familiarity one with another, as also to make their so doing evident unto others; it being most unseemly for those who preach the Gospel of Peace unto others, to live in discord among themselves: for, *Paul went up to Jerusalem to see Peter*, as for other reasons, so that hereby he might evidence that love and harmony which was between them. 4. The Lord doth so direct the steps of those who do acknowledge Him in all their wayes, *Prov.* 3. 6. that His glory and their good is sometimes eminently brought about by some of the ordinary passages

passages of their life, even beyond their own intention or purpose : as here *Paul's* deferring to go to *Jerusalem* for the space of three years, his abode there only fifteen dayes, and his seeing none of the Apostles there save *Peter* and *James*, do serve as an evidence to refute that calumny of his adversaries against his Doctrine and Office, and hath been ordered so of God for that end ; although *Paul* in the mean time knew not so much, being then ignorant that ever he should meet with such a calumny. 5. As Ministers may and ought to meet sometimes together, to evidence and entertain mutual love and concord, and because of that mutual inspection which they ought to have one of another ; So their meetings ought neither to be so frequent, or of so long continuance, as that thereby their Flocks may suffer prejudice : for, the word importeth that this was a serious visit, and about serious things, made by *Paul* to *Peter*, and yet he remained with him but a short time untill he returned to his Charge again ; *He went to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen dayes.*

Verf. 20. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

THe Apostle, having to do with adversaries, and some also amongst the seduced Galatians, who gave not much credit to his Word, asserteth the truth of all he hath said, and is to say, in matter of fact, through the whole Epistle, and confirmeth it by an oath, where, according to the use of Scripture elf-where, he expresseth but one principal part of an oath, to wit, a confession of God's presence and power to witnesse and judge the Truth, and includeth the other parts, such as our invocation of God to bear witnesse that we speak the truth, *2 Cor. 1. 23.* and imprecation, that God would be a Judge to take revenge upon us, if we lie, *Ruth 1. 17.* *Dact. 1.* The Spirit of God in Scripture hath not left us destitute of sufficient evidences to be found in Scripture it self, from whence

whence the truth of it may be made out, and all atheistical doubtings to the contrary removed, among which this is one, the solemn Oath of those who write it, being men otherwise godly and worthy of trust, attesting the truth thereof, and taking God to witnesse against their own soul, if they did lie in what they wrote; *Behold, before God, I lie not.* 2. The choicest Servants of Christ may be looked upon as liars, and unworthy to be trusted, even by those to whom they are sent: and yet they must not give over to preach, as knowing the Word spoken by them doth still get credit from some, *2 Cor. 2. 15.* and will beget trust to it self from others, whom God hath ordained to be saved, *Act. 13. 48.* and for the rest, it will seal up their condemnation and make them inexcusable, *2 Cor. 2. 16.* for, *Paul* his purging of himself from lying, doth import some did suspect him for a liar, and yet he ceaseth not to take pains upon them; *I lie not.* 3. It is not unlawfull for Christians under the New Testament to take an Oath, providing it be with these conditions, 1. That the thing which we swear be truth; so was it in *Paul's* Oath; *I lie not.* 2. That there be weighty reasons for taking an Oath; so was it here, the glory of God, the dignity of his Apostleship, which was questioned by his adversaries; the confirmation of the Faith of those Galatians, and of all Christians, as to the truth of the things asserted, did call upon *Paul* to swear. 3. That we swear only by the Name of God, and not by the creatures, *Zeph. 1. 5.* seeing none but God can bear witnesse to the secrets of his heart who doth swear, *Act. 15. 8.* So did *Paul*, *Behold, before God.* 4. That we do not swear rashly, but with great attention, preparation and reverence, seeing an Oath is a kind of invocation, *2 Cor. 1. 23.* and a part of divine Worship, *Deut. 6. 13.* Thus *Paul* prefixeth to his Oath a word of attention, *Behold, before God, I lie not.*

Verf. 21. *Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia,*

22. *And was unknown by face unto the Churches of Judea, which were in Christ.*

23. *But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the Faith which once he destroyed.*

24. *And they glorified God in me.*

Followeth a fourth Evidence to the truth of what he asserted, ver. 11, 12. to wit, That after he was driven from Jerusalem by persecution, *Act. 9. 29, 30.* he discharged his Apostolick Office in Syria and Cilicia his own Country, (*Act. 21. 39.*) ver. 31. and this with the approbation of the Christian Churches in Judea, who, although he was unknown unto them, ver. 22. and though they had heard by fame, that he was the man who had formerly been a bloody persecutor; Yet, God did so bless the very report which they had of his Calling to preach, as an Apostle, and consequently of his miraculous Conversion, ver. 23. as they could not deny them to be divine, as appeared by their acknowledging of God's mercy and power manifested in them, and by their thanksgiving to God for them, ver. 24. *Dott. 1.* Though not one of the Apostles was universal Pastor and Bishop of the whole World above the rest, seeing all of them were endued with equal Authority by Christ, *Mat. 20. 26, 27.* Yet, if this illimited power were to be pleaded-for unto any of them, there should be more pretence of reason for placing of it in Paul, than in Peter, or any of the rest; Paul being particularly ordained to be the Apostle of the Gentiles, *Act. 9. 15.* and acknowledged heartily by the Jews to be so, and having actually discharged his Office far and near, as in Arabia, and then in Damascus, ver. 17. and now in Syria and Cilicia, as also at Rome, *Act. 23. 11.* and having been the first planter almost of all the primitive Christian Churches among the

the Gentiles, as appeareth from the history of the *Acts*, and *Paul's* own Epistles; and all this he did by immediate Authority from Jesus Christ, ver. 16. and was not sent out by *Peter*, as his Deputy or Suffragan, but in all things was his Equal, chap. 2. ver. 6, 7, 8. So little ground have the Papists to plead that *Peter* was universal Pastor above all the rest, and much lesse, that the Pope is *Peter's* Successor in this Charge; *Afterwards* I came into the regions of *Syria* and *Cilicia*. 2. A faithfull Minister of Jesus Christ, will labour mainly to be known unto, and acquainted with the People of his own Charge, not ingyring himself upon the Charge of others, or labouring so much as indirectly to draw the affections of People towards himself from those who are their own Pastors, and particularly intrusted with the actual charge of their souls: thus *Paul* was unknown by face unto the Churches of *Judea*, as not having conversed familiarly with them, though he had sometimes occasion to be among them in his frequent going to, and returning from *Jerusalem*, and that because they were a part of *Peter's* charge, chap. 2. ver. 7. Doct. 3. Immediately, or very soon after Christ's Death and Resurrection the preaching of the Gospel hath been marvelously blessed, in converting of numerous multitudes to Jesus Christ; yea, and more blessed than readily it hath been in any age of the Church since, whereof this is one evidence amongst many other, which are in the history of the *Acts*, and in *Paul's* Epistles, that at this time whereof *Paul* writeth, which is supposed to be the fourth or fifth year after Christ's Ascension, there were several Christian Churches planted with Officers, and constituted according to the Rule of the Gospel, even in *Judea* amongst that people, who had hardened their hearts against the light, *Mat.* 13. 15. and rejected and crucified the Lord of life, 1 *Thess.* 2. 15. The Gospel was then new, and fresh, the Preachers of it unanimous among themselves, the Truths insisted upon most by them, were such as did relate to Faith in Christ, and Repentance from dead works, and the most necessary

sary duties of a Christian-life, besides that God's design was to bring the Gospel once in credit and request with a blinded and idolatrous World at the first breaking-up thereof, and therefore the preaching of it was attended with more successe, and a richer blessing at that time than ordinarily it hath been since; *Unto the Churches in Judea.* 4. Not only particular Believers, but also whole visible Churches, are in Christ, though in a much different way: real Believers are in Him savingly, so, as to be freed from condemnation by Him, *Rom. 8 1-*. being knit to Him by the band of saving Faith, *Eph. 3. 17.* and receiving the influence of saving graces from Him, *Job. 7. 38, 39.* Again, visible Churches are in Christ in the respects presently mentioned, only as to the better part of them, and with regard had to real Believers, who alwayes are among them: but besides this, the whole bulk of visible Churches, and of visible Church-members, are in Christ, so, as they enjoy from Him outward privileges and divine Ordinances, *Psa. 147. 19, 20.* the communication of common gifts from the Spirit of God, *1 Cor. 12. 8.* and some measure of divine protection more than the rest of the world, *Isa. 27. 2, 3.* and these all by vertue of their union with Him; the bond whereof, is the profession of His Name, and of those substantial Truths which relate unto Him either personally or parentally; which external union betwixt Christ and the visible Church, is sealed up by Baptism; *The Churches of Judea, which were in Christ.* 5. Such power hath Christ over the hearts of very enemies, so deep are His engagements to enlarge His own Kingdom, (*Psal. 2. 9.*) that before means and instruments be deficient for the propagation of the Gospel, He will turn the hearts of desperate enemies, and make most bitter persecutors to be eminent, lively, and painful Preachers: so was it here, *He who persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the Faith which once he destroyed.* 6. How patient ought the Church of Christ to be under saddest persecutions, and how far from base despondency of spirit, as if her case were wholly

wholly desperate and remediless, seeing Jesus Christ at an instant can carry captive her chiefest adversaries, and make them to be her stoutest friends, as appeareth from this, *He who persecuted us, now preacheth.* 7. As godlesse persecutors propose unto themselves no lesse than the total overthrow and rooting-out of Truth, though neither Men nor Devils shall be ever able to effectuate it, *Mat. 16. 18.* so men may look, if they repent not, *Luke 13. 3.* to be justly charged with the guilt of all that evil, which once they intended, as if they had actually accomplished it, although it was without their reach so to do: for, that *Faith*, or Doctrine of Faith (as *Tit. 1. 13.*) which *Paul* at this time did preach, is said once to have been destroyed by him; because he aimed at no lesse; and his sin before God was no lesse than if he had done it, although the Lord in mercy did pardon it, *1 Tim. 1. 13.* *Now preacheth the Faith which once he destroyed.* 8. We ought so to look upon notable changes which do fall out, whether in particular persons or publick societies, whether to the better or the worse, as that we may see somewhat of God manifested in them, either His Justice or Mercy, Wisdom or Power, some one Attribute of His or other, and so. as we may give a suitable return, whether of fear or joy, thankfulness or admiration, or of any other sanctified frame of spirit and holy performance, for which, such a manifestation calleth: for, those Christians in Judea, did so look upon this notable change in *Paul*, as to see God's mercy and power manifested in it, and accordingly with joy, did give God thanks: so much is imported in this, *They glorified God in me*, saith he. 9. Whensoever God is pleased to make a man instrumental, whether for our own particular good, or the more publick benefit of Christ's Church, as we would not be ingrateful unto the instruments themselves, *Judg. 9. 16. &c.* so neither are we to rest upon them, ascribing the praise of what they do to them, but as we would not provoke the Lord to smite them, or at least to make them

them uselesse to us, 1 Cor. 4. 6. we are to look unto God more than them, ascribing the praise of what they do unto Him, as that which is His proper right and due: so do they ascribe to God the praise of any good, which Paul did by his preaching; *They glorified God in me, or, concerning me.* 10. The more that God hath made it convincingly, and from clear evidences, manifest to the conscience of His People, that a Work is owned and approven by Him, and hath drawn an acknowledgement from them to that purpose unto His own praise, it aggregeth the sin of those the more, who would afterwards question or deny that Work to be His: for, the Apostle's scope, in part, is, to aggregate the sin of his adversaries, who denied him to be an Apostle immediately sent from Jesus Christ, and that the Doctrine preached by him was the Truth of God, from this, that the Churches in *Judea* were convinced of the contrary, and had acknowledged so much long since, to the praise of God, by giving glory unto Him on Paul's behalf, so that those Galatians and the false Apostles, were guilty of obscuring the glory of God, shining forth in his Conversion and Office, which was already acknowledged by others; *And they glorified God in me.*

C H A P. I I.

IN the first part of this Chapter, the Apostle addeth some further Evidences, that both his Office and Doctrine were divine. As first, They were such as might abide the censure of the chief Apostles, ver. 1, 2. Secondly, In the main thing controverted, which was about Circumcision, the other Apostles did joyn with him, in that they were not for, but against, the circumcizing of *Titus*, ver. 3. and for a weighty reason, ver. 4, 5. Thirdly, In that meeting, which was at *Jerusalem*, the other Apostles did find nothing for which to challenge either him or his Doctrine, ver. 6. but upon the contrary, perceiving that *Paul* was called of God to be an Apostle, ver. 7. both from that divine assistance, wherewith he was accompanied, ver. 8. and from those Apostolick gifts wherewith he was endued, they acknowledged both him and *Barnabas* for Apostles, ver. 9. and all of them did part good friends; the collecting of some supply to the poor Jews among the Gentiles being recommended by the rest to *Paul*, ver. 10. Fourthly, He did rebuke *Peter*, when in his practice he declined from the Doctrine taught by *Paul* concerning the abrogation of the Ceremonial Law; and for any thing which appeareth to the contrary, *Peter* in this debate, did yeeld to *Paul*, as having truth for him, to ver. 15.

In the second part, because this dispute about the Ceremonial Law did fly very high (the false Apostles urging the observation of it, as meritorious of justification) therefore the Apostle turneth the force of the dispute against Justification by Works, and proveth by several Arguments, that we are justified by Faith only: As first, The believing Jews, who had as much reason to boast in their works as any, ver. 15. did renounce all confidence in them for Justification, ver. 16. Next, he preoccupieth an Objection, and sheweth that this Doctrine of Justification by Faith without Works, giveth no encouragement

ment to sin, ver. 17. Because, 1. it did presse the mortifying and destroying of sin, ver. 18. And, 2. though it did free them from the Law in several respects; yet not, as it is the rule of an holy life, ver. 19. Yea, 3. it doth tye the justified person more strictly to subdue sin, and lead an holy life, ver. 20. Lastly, he addeth a second Argument, to prove that we are justified by Faith only; because, if we were justified by Works, Free-grace and Christi's death should be uselesse, ver. 21.

Verf. 1. *Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem, with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.*

2. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run in vain.

THe Apostle, first, mentioneth another journey of his to *Jerusalem*, together with the time, when, and the companions with whom he went, and that extraordinary Instinct and Command from God, which moved him to undertake that journey, ver. 1, 2. And secondly, sheweth that when he came to *Jerusalem*, he did privately communicate the Doctrine which he had preached among the Gentiles, to the most eminent of the Apostles; that by their subscribing unto it, as to the same with that which themselves did preach, his by-past and future labours might have the more successe, which (as it seemeth) was in hazard to be much retarded by the calumnies of his adversaries, affirming that the other Apostles did not approve of the Doctrine which he preached ver. -2. So that here is a fifth Evidence, that both his Doctrine and Office were divine; in that not only they were such as might abide the censure of the other Apostles, but also that he in the course of his Ministry was singularly owned and approved of by God, as being directed by immediate revelation from Him.

Dott.

Doct. 1. It pleaseth the Lord often, in mercy toward His Church, to preserve the lives of profitable Instruments for His Work for a long time, notwithstanding of all the endeavours of Men and Devils to the contrary: for, *Paul*, whose blood was much thirsted after, and whose hazards were so many in several places, and from several hands, (*2 Cor. 11. 26.*) is yet preserved, in despite of all, in the free exercise of his Ministry, for the space at least of fourteen years together, even though the space of time here mentioned were to be reckoned from his first conversion, which yet some do reckon from the third year following, to wit, the time mentioned, Chap. 1. ver. 18. *Then fourteen years after I went up, &c.* 2. It may be sometimes lawfull; yea, and necessary also, for a Minister, to go abroad from the Flock committed to his charge for a season, to wit, when and where the glory of God in defence of Truth, and in removal of what may mar the edification of the Lord's People, doth call him: for, *Paul* here taketh journey to *Jerusalem*, leaving the Gentiles for a season, who were his own more proper Charge, *Act. 9. 15.* that his consent in Doctrine with the other Apostles might be made evident, and so the edification of those, to whom he did preach, more advanced; *I went up to Jerusalem*, saith he, and that *lest I should run in vain. Jerusalem* was seated on a mountain, and compassed with mountains, *Psal. 125. 1, 2.* whence it is said he went up to it. 3. It is the part of all, and especially of Christ's Ministers, the more they are who mark their steps, and mis-represent their actions, to walk the more circumspectly; that so far as is possible, the mouth of adversaries may be stopped, *2 Cor. 11. 12.* Thus *Paul*, being to make it evident that the other Apostles did approve the Doctrine preached by him, taketh with him *Barnabas* and *Titus* as two witnesses, according to the Law, sufficient (*Deut. 17. 6.*) to give testimony to the Apostles what Doctrine he had preached to the Gentiles; and again to testify to the Gentiles that consent, which was betwixt him and the Apostles; And this, lest

his adversaries might have objected that he had lyed in both, or either of these; *With Barnabas, and took with me Titus also.* 4. Though we are not now to expect immediate revelations from God, whether for direction in one duty, or information of future events, such as were in use before the Canon of the Scripture was compleated, and the gift of extraordinary Prophecy had ceased, *Heb. 1. 1.* Yet seeing the written Word is given unto us as a compleat Rule both for Faith (*Job. 20. 31.*) and Manners, (*2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.*) and as that which may abundantly supply the defect or want of all those extraordinary wayes, whereby God did make known His mind unto His People then, *Heb. 1. 1.* Therefore we ought to advise with God's Will, revealed in Scripture, and regulate all our actions, motions and journeys according to it, both for the lawfulness and expediency of what we undertake, *Psal. 119. 9.* that thus while we acknowledge God in all our wayes, He may direct our paths, *Prov. 3. 6.* Thus *Paul* advised with God in his journey: for, he *went up by revelation*; in place whereof, as said is, we have the written Word now. 5. How little ground the Papists have to infer from *Paul's* practice here, that the Church of *Rome*, and particularly the Pope, the head thereof, is the supreme Judge upon Earth of all questions pertaining to Religion; and that all Preachers, after *Paul's* example, should submit their Doctrine to be tried and judged by Peter's Successor, appeareth from this, passing-by other things, that *Paul* did not submit his Doctrine to be judged by *Peter*, or by any other, as if he had been either inferiour to them, or uncertain of the truth of that which he had preached: both which had been contrary to *Paul's* scope, which, as said is, was to evidence, that both his Doctrine and Office were immediately from God: Neither will the words bear further than that he did in a friendly and brotherly manner acquaint them with the Doctrine preached by him, that their approbation being given unto it, the mouth of adversaries might be stopped: for, the word, rendred to

communicate, signifieth to make any thing known to another in a familiar and friendly way, which in strict Law we are not bound to. See *Act. 25. 14.* where the same word is used : *And communicated unto them.* 6. Though the Minister of Jesus Christ is not to depend upon the approbation of others for confirmation of his Doctrine, as if he himself were uncertain of the truth thereof, before their testimony be added to it, chap. 1. ver. 8. Yet he is not to be so self-willed as to misregard what others do judge or think of what he preacheth, but ought to dimitt himself so far, as, when there is necessity, he may give a friendly account unto others of the Doctrine preached by him ; that so, if it be possible, mistakes arising through misinformation, may be removed, and the joynt consent of others to the truth of what he preacheth may be obtained : thus *Paul*, that he might gain their approbation, did *communicate* unto the Apostles *that Gospel which he preached among the Gentiles.* 7. When the approbation of others is sought after unto any action or deed, christian candor will, and ordinary prudence may teach a man to report the matter of fact truly, which he would have approved of ; lest otherwise an approbation surreptitiously required, and given upon misinformation and through mistake, may, upon a discovery, tend unto the informer's greater prejudice : for, *Paul* here, being to gain the approbation of the Apostles unto his Doctrine, did give them a faithfull account of that same Doctrine which he had preached : *I communicated that Doctrine which I preach among the Gentiles.* 8. It tendeth in no small measure to uphold the credit of a man's Ministry against his adversaries, that in his Doctrine he hath been alwayes constant to himself, without wavering or contradicting of himself in any thing, which he did ever vent for Truth ; providing alwayes, that he be constant in the Truth : for, constancy in Error, is nothing else but obstinacy ; and to retract an Error, is praise-worthy, *Philip. 3. 7.* Thus *Paul*, that he may further stop the mouth of adversaries, sheweth the Doctrine

which he did preach from the beginning of his Ministry, and whereof he did give an account to the Apostles, was the same which he did presently preach, while he saith, *I communicated unto them the Gospel which I preach*. It is a word of the present time. 9. As there are alwayes some in the Church of God, who for their place, graces or parts, have deservedly more of reputation than others: so christian prudence will teach a man to be so far from striving against the stream and current of common fame and universal applause, by labouring to discountenance or oppose without necessity, those who are so deservedly applauded unto; that he will endeavour, by giving due respect unto them, to receive approbation from them, whereby he may be in a better capacity to do good unto others, as being approved-of by such: for, *Paul at Jerusalem addresseth himself to those that were of reputation, to wit, James, Peter and John* (ver. 9.) who, though in their Apostolick Power they were but equal with the other Apostles, *1 Cor. 9. 5*. Yet because of their age, gravity and some other respects, were generally more esteemed of, than the rest; and this he did for gaining of their approbation to his Office and Doctrine: that so he might not run in vain; *I went up*, saith he, *to them that were of reputation, &c.* 10. There is much prudence required in the publick debating of controverted Truths in Religion, neither would it be ventured upon without necessity, and until all other private means for composing of differences be first assayed, *Act. 15. 28*. lest thereby unnecessary doubts and scruples be created in the vulgar sort, who do often prove but unskillfull Judges in weighty and intricate Questions: thus *Paul*, while this controversie was but yet in its birth, did not make any publick noise of it, communicating the matter but privately to them that were of reputation. 11. It is the part of a faithfull Minister, not only to preach the Gospel, and go about all the other parts of his Ministerial Office faithfully and painfully, and so as he may be approven unto the consciences of all, *2 Tim. 4. 5*. but he must be also

also solicitous about the successe of his pains towards those among whom he laboureth : for, so was Paul, who compareth his continual labours and painfulnesse in his Ministry to running in a race, and yet was carefull, lest he had run in vain, that is, lest his labours had wanted fruit among the hearers; for otherwise, and as to the end intended to be brought about by God, *2 Cor. 2. 15, 16.* or as to the promised reward *Isa. 40. 4.* the work of a faithfull Minister is never in vain; *Lest by any means I should run in vain,* saith he. 12. Nothing marreth the good and successe of the Gospel among the hearers more than difference of judgments, and strifes and debates about these differences among the eminent Preachers thereof: for, hereby are people carried unto schismes, *1 Cor. 1. 12.* the Truth of God received with respect to persons, *1 Cor. 4. 6.* and atheism given way to by many, as resolving to believe nothing till Preachers agree among themselves, *Act. 18. 17.* and many stumbling-blocks casten before people of all sorts by the venting of passions, jealousies, animosities, and sometimes a spirit of revenge, which do usually accompany such divisions, *2 Cor. 12. 20.* for, Paul sheweth he endeavoured so much to get the joynt consent of the other Apostles, to the Doctrine preached by him, lest by the calumnies of his adversaries, who affirmed that Paul did differ from the rest, his preaching and other pains should have been uselesse; *Lest by any means I should run, or had run in vain.*

Verf. 3. *But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.*

HERE is a sixth Evidence, especially of the truth of his Doctrine, to wit, that in the point controverted, betwixt him and his adversaries, the other Apostles did joyn with Paul, judging Circumcision to be a thing indifferent, and not of absolute necessity to Salvation, else they would have required Titus to be circumcised, which they did not, but received him in fellowship with them,

though he was an uncircumcised Greek. *Doct. 1.* Amongst those controversies which did very early trouble the Christian Church, this, concerning the necessity of observing Circumcision, and the rest of those Levitical Ordinances, was one, which appeareth (as from several other Scriptures, *Act. 15. 1, 2.* so) from this, where Paul, mentioning how the Apostles joyned with him in that controversie, which was betwixt him and his adversaries, doth give the instance in Circumcision; *Neither Titus was compelled to be circumcised.* 2. Though Circumcision, and the rest of those Levitical Ordinances, were necessarily to be observed by vertue of a divine Precept, *Gen. 17. 10, &c.* and as the external part of Worship then prescribed, *Heb. 9. 10.* untill Christ should come in the flesh, and offer-up Himself a Sacrifice upon the Crosse, *Eph. 2. 15.* Yet, after he was come, they were abolished, and all necessity to observe them, through vertue of a divine precept, removed: the body being come, the shadow did evanish, *Col. 2. 17.* the Jews and Gentiles were then to be united in one People, and so that partition-wall was to be removed, *Eph. 2. 14, 15.* the Church also then, to wit, under the New Testament, was bound to believe, and accordingly to professe, that Christ had already come in the flesh, & offered-up a perfect and satisfactory Sacrifice to God, which was wholly inconsistent with the observing of those Legal Ceremonies and Sacrifices, which by vertue of divine institution did serve mainly for types and figures of Christ to come, *Heb. 8. 5.* and 9. 8, 9. for, because of those reasons, the Apostles did admit of *Titus*, a Greek, to their fellowship, not requiring him to be circumcised; *But neither Titus was compelled to be circumcised.* 3. It is not unlawful, but a duty incumbent to those who are in place, not only to injoyne attendance upon, and practising of the external commanded duties of Divine Worship, but also by rebuke and other Church-censures, to constrain and urge those who are disobedient: for, *Paul* maketh the Apostles their not compelling of *Titus* to be circum-

circumcised, an evidence that they did not judge Circumcision at that time to be a part of commanded Worship, which imports, if they had thought otherwise, they would have compelled him to it (to wit) by the force of Church-censures; for they had not the power of the Magistrate to compel him by pecunial mulcts, imprisonment, or such like; *But neither Titus was compelled to be circumcised.* 4. From this it followeth, that the Civil Magistrate may constrain men, by inflicting of corporal punishments, to go about the external duties of commanded Worship, in case that more gentle means do not prevail: for, if constraining by Ecclesiastick-censures be not unlawful, nor a tyranny over the consciences of men, constraining by Civil-censures, must be lawful also: now that men may be compelled by the former, as said is, is here supposed, while he saith, *Neither Titus was compelled to be circumcised.*

Verf. 4. And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

5. *To whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you.*

HE giveth the reason, why Titus was not compelled to be circumcised, to wit, because some, called here *false brethren*, as having been urgers of the necessity of Circumcision, and of the other Levitical Ordinances, and were brought in to be members of the Church at Jerusalem by fraud, and through reason of their large pretences to piety, whereby they covered their heretical spirits for the time: for, so much doth the word, *rendred unawares brought in*, hold forth: these men, I say, had secretly conveyed themselves to that meeting, which Paul had with the other Apostles: and this of purpose to try if Paul would stand to the defence of that liberty from the Ceremonial Law before the Apostles, which he had preached among the Gentiles, as a part of Christ's purchase:

chafe : which if he had not done, but ceded to them in that one particular of circumcising *Titus*, then they would have triumphed over *Paul*, among the Gentiles, as if he had recanted before the Apostles; and so would have endeavoured to bring back the Apostles, Gentiles, and the whole Church, to the bondage of the Ceremonial Law, ver. 4. Therefore was it that neither *Paul*, nor the other Apostles, would yeeld to the importunate desire of these false brethren, no not *for an hour*, that is, in using of Circumcision but that once; and that because, this had been to subject the Apostles, and their Doctrine in the Truth controverted, to their adversaries; which the Apostles did resolutely withstand, that so the Doctrine of the Gospel might remain sincere and uncorrupt among the Churches of Christ, and particularly among the Galatians, ver. 5.

From Verſ. 4. *Learn*, 1. Though the Ceremonial Law of *Moses* was abolished by Christ's coming in the flesh; (See upon ver. 3. doct. 2.) Yet the use and practice thereof was not in it self sinfull, but indifferent for a time, chiefly to the Jews, and in some points at least; the Lord from respect to that, which was once His own Ordinance, and from condescendence to the weaknesse of the Jews, who being educated in the practice of these Levitical Ordinances, could not be so soon convinced of their being laid aside, did proceed slowly to the total abrogation of them, removing first the yce of necessity through vertue of a divine precept, whereby they were obliged to observe them, and leaving for a time the practice lawfull and indifferent, until the Doctrine of the Gospel and freedom from that yoke by Jesus Christ, might be sufficiently cleared, the term whereof is affixed for the most part to be the destruction of *Jerusalem* both of City and Temple by the *Romans*, whereby the most obstinate in it, considering that Christ had now suffered, might have been convinced that an end was put to the Jewish Policy, both Civil and Ecclesiastick, by God; after which time, the use of the Ceremonial Law was not only dead and

and unprofitable, but also deadly and damnable: thus the Apostles did not compel *Titus* to be circumcised; not as if the use of Circumcision had been at that time simply and in it self unlawfull and sinfull: for, *Paul* himself did circumcise *Timothy* upon grave and weighty considerations, much about, and probably after that time, *Act. 16. 3.* but because that false brethren, then present, would have made bad use of their doing otherwise, to the prejudice of the Gospel; *and that because of false brethren, &c.* 2. Though the practice of the Ceremonial Law was for that time a thing in it self indifferent; Yet (which also holds, of all other things in their own nature indifferent, *1 Cor. 8. 9, 10, &c.*) it might not alwayes and upon all occasions lawfully, and without sin be practised, but the practice thereof was to be ruled according to charity and prudence; So that in the case of giving scandal by the neglect thereof to the weak and infirm, it was to be practised, as *Paul* did, *Act. 16. 3.* but in case of hardening the obstinate, and confirming them in their opinion of its necessity to Salvation, and thereby giving the adversaries of Truth advantage against the Truth by the practice thereof, it was to be foreborn: for, the Apostles here, did not circumcise *Titus*, because of false brethren, brought in unawares, who would have taken advantage from the practice of the Apostles, if they had circumcised him, to bring the Church of Christ again into bondage. 3. It hath been the Churches lot in all times and all places, to have a mixture of wheat and tares, regenerate and unregenerate, godly and profane in it: even the Church which was planted and governed by the Apostles themselves, had false brethren: for, saith *Paul*, *Because of false brethren unawares brought in.* 4. Heretical spirits, not only can, but usually do so far dissemble their Errors, *1 Pet. 2. -1-* and pretend so much to piety, thereby to gain respect and credit, *2 Tim. 3. 5.* that the most quick-sighted of men will readily be deceived by them, taking them for the just contrary of that which they really are, until they find an opportune time to discover them.

themselves: Thus, those *false brethren* were brought in *un-
awares*, to wit, to the Church at *Jerusalem*; they carried
the matter so handsomly, what by dissembling their Er-
rors, what by their pretences to Piety, that the Apostles
themselves, acting as ordinary Ministers in the admission
of Church-members, (*dit. 6. 3. &c.*) could see nothing
for which to stumble at them, or reject them. 5. Here-
tical spirits are most active, vigilant, and so effronted as
to ingyre themselves upon the most private Societies and
Fellowships of others, if their presence may contribute
any thing to advance their pernicious Errors: Thus
those false brethren do intrude themselves upon that
meeting, which *Paul* had with the other Apostles, though
it was but of few, and private, ver. 2. *Who came in pri-
vately to spy out our liberty.* 6. It is too too usual for ma-
ny, to frequent the meetings of God's People and Ser-
vants, not that they may be edified from them; but that
they may find occasion to carp at what they hear, and
make bad use of it to the prejudice of Christ's Servants,
and to their own further confirmation in a sinful course,
who carry about their own judgment with them, they
come to ensnare others, and the Word of the Lord pro-
veth a snare unto them, *Ezek. 14. 4.* Thus those *false bre-
thren* came in privately to spy out their liberty, resolving
whatever had been done, they should have ground from
it to make *Paul* invidious; if *Titus* had been circumcised,
they were ready to traduce him to the Gentiles, as a man
who preached one thing to them, and practised the con-
trary among the Apostles; if he had not been circum-
cised, they had ground to incense the Jews against him,
as a contemner of that divine Ordinance. 7. *Jesus*
Christ having by that only Sacrifice of Himself upon the
Crosse, fulfilled all those Legal Types and Shadows of
things to come, *Heb. 8. 5.* and 9. 9. hath purchased li-
berty unto the Christian Church, and made them fully
free from the observation of those Levitical Ceremonies,
chap. 5. 1. hence this freedom is called *Our liberty which*
we have in Christ Jesus. 8. The Ceremonial Law of
Moses

Moses was a great bondage, and most burdensome yoke (*Act. 15. 10.*) to the ancient Church. what through the multitude of performances which were thereby enjoined; some whereof were extreamly expensive, *Lev. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.* chapters, others painfull and hazardous to the natural life, *Gen. 34. 25.* and others most wearisom to the flesh, *Deut. 16. 16.* and what through the punctual observance of all those Ordinances enjoined under most terrible Certifications, *Deut. 27. 26.* for, the Apostle calleth the return of the Christian Church to the observati- on of the Ceremonial Law, which was endeavoured by those false brethren, a bringing of them unto bondage; *That they might bring us unto bondage.*

From *Verf. 5. Learn, 1.* When things in themselves indifferent, are urged as necessary, and required as an evidence of our assent unto an untruth, or quitting of any part of Truth, in that case, which is indeed a case of confession, the practice of a thing indifferent, is sinfull, and to be abstained from: for, so did the false brethren urge the Circumcision of *Titus*, even as an evidence of Paul's receding from the Doctrine of Christian Liberty, and therefore he obeyed them not; *To whom we gave place, no not for an hour.* 2. Though much may be done for comopsing of Church-differences, by using all meek- ness and forbearance towards those who oppose them- selves, *2 Tim. 2. 25.* acting joyntly with them in those things, wherein there is an harmonious agreement, *Phil. 3. 16.* holding off publick debates in those things, where- about the difference is, *Rom. 14. 5.* providing they be not of the most weighty and substantial Truths, *Gal. 5. 2, 3.* Yet we are not for peace's cause to quit the least part of Truth, whether by a formal denying of it, or doing that which in reason may and ought to be so expounded: thus *Paul*, who for lawfull ceding did become all things to all men, *1 Cor. 4. 19. &c.* would not give place by way of subjection, so as to yeeld the cause controverted to the adversaries, neither would he do any thing, though never so little, and in its own nature indifferent, which might

might be an evidence of his yeelding; *To whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour*: he would not use Circumcision, no not that once, he would not cede one hair breadth to them. 3. A Minister of Christ, when he is called to confesse and avow Truth, hath not only his own peace with God, and keeping of a good conscience to look unto, 2 *Tim.* 2. 11, 12. but also the condition of his Flock, who will be much shaken or confirmed in the Truth, by his faint, or bold and faithfull confession: Thus Paul, in the present business, had an eye to the converted Gentiles, of whom were these Galatians, lest their Faith had been shaken by his inconsistency; *We gave not place, saith he, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you.* 4. It is not enough that people have the name of the Gospel among them, or some Truths of it being mixed with several Errors, but all, and especially Ministers, should endeavour to have the Gospel in purity and integrity, free from any mixture of contrary Errors; for, a little leaven (to which Error is compared, *Mat.* 16. 12.) leaveneth the whole lump, 1 *Cor.* 5. 6. Thus it was Paul's endeavour that *the truth of the Gospel might continue with them*, that is, the whole Doctrine of the Gospel not corrupted with any Error.

Verf. 6. But of these, who seemed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no mans person) for they who seemed to be somewhat, in conference added nothing to me.

Followeth a seventh Evidence, that both Paul's Doctrine and Office were divine, containing the event of that meeting which he had with the Apostles, in three things; the first whereof, is in this Verse, to wit, that of these, or from those who were looked upon as chief among the Apostles, of whom Paul's adversaries did boast, as if they had been his superiours, *Paul had learned nothing* (which last words, or some such like, are to be supplied for making out the sentence) and because their

personal prerogatives, such as that they had seen Christ in the flesh, were Apostles, when he was a persecutor, might have been objected to his prejudice; he sheweth these were not to be taken notice of by him, neither would be taken notice of by God, whose judgment is not swayed by any thing which is extrinsecal, and belongeth not to the cause in hand; and therefore their being Apostles before him, would not make his Office or Doctrine more uncertain, or lesse divine than theirs; seeing he was an Apostle now, aswell as they, and his Doctrine such as could not be questioned by themselves: for, after that conference, wherein he related to them the Gospel preached by him, they corrected nothing and added nothing to what he had said, but approved all. *Doct. 1.* It is nothing contrary to, but agreeth very well with Christians modesty and humility, for a man to speak to his own commendation in some cases; especially when he laboureth under reproach, and when the honour of God and the Gospel do also suffer with him: for, *Paul* avoweth that he learned nothing from the chief Apostles, and was not in any thing inferior to them; because if he had yeilded to the contrary, his adversaries would presently have retorted that he was no Apostle, but, at the most, an ordinary Preacher, and his Doctrine in time bypast had been croneous; *But of these*, or from those, who seemed to be somewhat, supply (for making out the sense) *I learned nothing*; which *Paul* concealeth in modesty, it being that part of the phrase which should have expressed his praise most, and leaveth it to be supplied by the reader from the scope of the purpose, and from the like expression in the close of the verse: The like form of speaking is used, *1 Chron. 4. 10. Oh that thou wouldst, &c. or, If thou wouldst.* 2. It is not unusual for heretical spirits, to cry-up some of Christ's faithfull Ministers above the rest, and so to have the persons of men in admiration; and this not from any respect to them, but for their own advantage, *Jude, ver. 16.* as hereby rendring those, whom they so cry-up, suspect of favouring their Error,

Error, and bearing down the rest with the pretended shew of their authority: Thus *Paul's* adversaries did extoll *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, as much preferable to him, because of their personal prerogatives above him, as appeareth from *Paul's* labouring so much to prove that they were no wayes superiour to him, and to take off any prejudice which might rise against himself from their personal prerogatives of seeing Christ in the flesh, and being Apostles before him; *But from those I learned nothing, whosoever they were, &c.* 3. In our esteem of persons

and things, our judgment ought not to be ruled by the approbation of men, so as to put a price upon every thing which is commonly esteemed of among men, *Luke 16. 15.* but by the approbation of God, so that every thing may have more or lesse weight with us according as He esteemeth of it: Thus Paul regarded not the personal prerogatives of the other Apostles, as bearing any weight in the present businesse, because God regarded them not; *It maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no mans person.*

4. The Lord, in passing judgement upon persons or things, is not swayed with any thing which is extrinsecall, and belongeth not unto the cause whereabout He judgeth: He respecteth not the person of man, that is, He will not approve or disapprove of a man's cause for his person, if it be not otherwise worthy of approbation or reproof; because most frequently a man's cause and person come under different considerations: for, saith he, *God accepteth of no mans person*: whereby in this place is meant, that the personall prerogatives of the other Apostles did not bear weight with God to make *Paul's* Office or Doctrine more uncertain, and lesse divine than theirs; seeing whatever other use those prerogatives did serve for; Yet they appertained nothing to the present cause. 5. Though some of Christ's faithfull Servants, may be cryed-up by light wits, or heretical spirits, to the down-bearing of the deserved estimation of others; Yet so far ought they themselves to be from being transported with groundlesse applause, and from despising those others,

others, beyond whom they are so much esteemed of; that they are to bear-up their credit so much the more by withholding no approbation of theirs from them which is their due, although they should thereby contradict their own flatterers, and make them lyars: for, those Apostles, who were so much cryed-up by the false brethren, to Paul's prejudice, did thoroughly approve his Doctrine, declaring him to be an orthodox Preacher and an Apostle of Jesus Christ as well as themselves, contrary to what his adversaries and their flatterers affirmed of him; *In conference they added nothing to me: and, ver. 9. They gave me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship.*

Verf. 7. *But contrariwise, when they saw that the Gospel of the Uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the Gospel of the Circumcision was unto Peter:*

8. *(For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the Apostleship of the Circumcision, the same was mighty in me towards the Gentiles)*

9. *And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the Grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Heathen, and they unto the Circumcision.*

Here is a second part of the event of that Meeting at Jerusalem, to wit, that when the Apostles, James, Cephas, (that is, Peter, Joh. 1. 42.) and John had by certain evidences found that the Gospel of the Uncircumcision, or the Apostolick-office to preach the Gospel among the uncircumcised Gentiles, was concredited by God to Paul as well as the Gospel of Circumcision, or the Apostolick-office to preach the Gospel among the circumcised Jews, was committed unto Peter, ver. 7. which they did gather from this, that the like divine assistance, blessing and successe, did accompany the labours both of Peter and Paul towards their respective Charges, and so their Office behaved to be equally divine, ver. 8. and when those three Apostles (who were

commonly, and no lesse deservedly, reputed pillars of the Church, as being, under God, the upholders of it by their Ministry, gifts, diligence and fidelity) had seen the *grace*, or gifts, both ordinary and extraordinary, which were bestowed by God upon *Paul*, fitting him every way for the Apostolick-office, they did without more ado acknowledge both *Paul* and *Barnabas* for their Collegues or fellow-Apostles, giving them the right hand in evidence of the same, as also of their mutual agreement in dividing of their Charge, so as that *Paul* and *Barnabas* should go on to discharge their Apostolick-office among the Gentiles, and the other three among the Jews, ver. 9. which paction is nothing contrary to what is held forth, *Act. 13. 7.* for, *Peter* speaketh not there, that his ordinary Charge was to preach unto the Gentiles, but of that one act of his, mentioned *Act. 10.* whereby he was at one time employed to preach to them at the first beginning of their conversion: All which doth evidence that *Paul* was an Apostle, immediately called, and acknowledged to be such by the other Apostles. *Doct. 1.* This Scripture doth many wayes refute that dream of the Papists concerning *Peter's* primacy, or supremacy over the rest of the Apostles, and over the Catholick Church, and of the Pope's succeeding to *Peter* in that supposed illimited trust: for, 1. the Apostle's drift in all this, is, to shew that he was every way equal with *Peter*, and the rest of the Apostles, and no wayes inferiour unto them, and that he was acknowledged to be so by *Peter* himself; so that *Peter* was not suprem over all: *When they saw that the Gospel of Circumcision was committed unto me, &c.* 2. *Paul* doth here compare himself mainly and particularly with *Peter*, while he expresseth him by name, even when he is speaking of these things, which were common to *Peter* with the other two, *James* and *John*, as that the Gospel of Circumcision was committed to *Peter*, and this because it seemeth *Paul's* adversaries did mainly cry-up *Peter*, as superiour to him; so that this of *Peter's* primacy above the other Apostles hath been an old plea,
but

but ill grounded, and expressly confuted by Paul in this place; *As the Gospel of Circumcision was committed unto Peter.* 3. We find here a divine Ordinance, that Peter should exercise his Office among the Jews, as their Apostle, of which Ordinance they can produce no change; and so if the Pope plead to be Peter's successor, he must challenge a superiority over the Jews, and hath nothing to do with us; *As the Gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.* 4. Paul, by vertue of the same divine Ordinance, was to exercise his Office among the Gentiles, as their Apostle, and endued with the same Authority in all points, which Peter had over the Jews; and therefore Peter was not supream: But if the Pope give-out himself for universal Pastor over the whole World, he must not plead his succession to Peter so much as to Paul, who had the Gospel of the Uncircumcision committed to him: which was a Charge extending almost to all the universal World. 5. While there is a question here of dignity among the Apostles, James is first named before Peter, as being of eminent Authority among the Apostles, who was President at the Council of Jerusalem; for, he spake last, and concluded all, *Act. 15. 13. &c.* to whom Paul did betake himself, and with whom all the Elders did convene in a matter of great concernment, and not with Peter, *Act. 21. 18.* so that James hath rather been supream than Peter; at least, it followeth, the first naming of Peter in other places, (*Mat. 10. 2. Mark 3. 16.*) is no sufficient ground whereon to build his supremacy: And when James, Cephas, and John. 6. Peter was at this time at Jerusalem, and without doubt had not yet seen Rome, seventeen years at least after Christ's Resurrection, ver. 1. compared with chap. 1. ver. 18. Yea, neither was he at Rome a long time after this, when Paul was there a prisoner, *Col. 4. 11. 2 Tim. 4. 16.* How then could he have sitten Bishop at Rome twenty five years before his death? as is alleaged for one main ground, upon which the Popes succession to Peter, as universal Bishop over the whole World, is founded:

And when James, Cephas and John perceived. 7. There is here a solemn and mutual agreement, that Paul, and not Peter, should be the Apostle of the Gentiles : and therefore, How could Peter have been twenty five years Bishop at Rome, except he had violated his solemn paction confirmed by giving his hand, which were most absurd once to mention ? *They gave the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Heathen.* Doct. 2. The more we wait upon God for His Call and Direction to our Undertaking, we have ground to expect, that the more of successe and of a blessing will accompany them : for, Paul, who did not undertake this journey to Jerusalem without the Call of God, ver. 2. hath all things succeeding with him according to his hearts wish ; so that not only the Apostles, did not condemn the Doctrine preached by him, ver. 6. but, on the contrary, gave him their approbation, acknowledging him for their Colleague and fellow-Apostle, whereby the mouthes of his adversaries might have been fully stopped : *But contrariwise they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship ;* for, so are the words to be constructed, all that which interveeneth being the reason which moved James, Peter, and John to do what they did. Doct. 3. The Note which ariseth from dividing of the Charge of Jews and Gentiles betwixt Peter and Paul, is at large, Col. 1. 25. doct. 3. Doct. 4. The Office of preaching the Gospel, is a special Trust, whereby a rich treasure of saving Truths (2 Cor. 4. 7.) is concredited to weak men, who must be answerable to God how they keep, maintain and dispense that Treasure for the good of souls : hence he saith, *the Gospel was committed*, or, as a rich Treasure, intrusted to him ; *The Gospel of the Uncircumcision was committed unto me.* 5. It is not the pains of Ministers, Isa. 49. 4. or any vertue which is in the Word preached, as of it self, 1 Cor. 1. 18. from whence the successe of the Ministry among a People floweth, but from the effectual working of the Spirit of God, whereby He effectually worketh that which the Word doth presse upon

upon us, *1 Cor. 3. 6.* for, *Paul* ascribeth the succeſſe both of his own and *Peter's* Miniſtry to this ; *He that wrought effectually in Peter, the ſame was mighty in me.* 6. The power with which the Lord accompanieth His Word towards thoſe whom he intendeth to convert by it, is moſt efficacious and ſuch as cannot be reſiſted, but breaketh through and taketh away whatever doth oppoſe it ; *He that wrought effectually* : the word ſignifieth to work with pith and energy, and frequently it ſignifieth to work with irrefiſtible efficacy. 7. Where a Miniſters pains are much bleſſed of God, for the turning of many ſouls to God, and where a man is endued with gifts and parts for the Miniſterial Calling, it is a real testimony, and ſpeaking-evidence of that man's calling from God : for, from this do they gather, that the Goſpel of Uncircumciſion was committed to *Paul*, becauſe his Miniſtry was powerfull among the Gentiles, and endued with gifts fitting him every way for the Apoſtolic Office : for, ſaith he, *the ſame was mighty in me towards the Gentiles, and they perceived the Grace which was given unto me.* 8. It is the duty of Miniſters, as pillars, to uphold the Truth by their doctrine, prayers, graces and parts, *Iſa. 62. 6, 7.* *2 Tim. 2. 2.* to be conſtant in Truth againſt all contrary blaſts, *Mat. 11. 7.* to adorn the Truth by good example of an holy life, whereby they ought to ſhine before others, *Mat. 5. 16.* *1 Tim. 4. 12.* for, as *James, Cephas, and John*, were accounted pillars ; ſo they, and all faithful Miniſters are really ſuch : and *Paul* doth here indirectly tax the common opinion, whereby that name was appropriate only to thoſe three, which did belong alſo to others : Hence it is alſo that the Church Militant, in reſpect of the Miniſtry of the Word chiefly, is called the pillar and ground of Truth, *1 Tim. 3. -15.* And when *James, Cephas and John*, who ſeemed to be pillars. 9. Whom God doth call to the undergoing of any employment, and chiefly whom He calleth to the Miniſtry, thoſe he fitteth with gifts and abilities ſuitable for that employment in ſome meaſure

whether lesser or greater, *Mat. 25. 15.* for, *James, Cephas* and *John* did not acknowledge *Paul* to be an Apostle, called by God, but upon their perceiving that *Grace*, or gifts, both ordinary and extraordinary were bestowed upon him; *They saw that the Gospel of Uncircumcision was committed unto me, when they perceived the Grace that was given to me.* 10. We ought not to withhold our approbation, especially when it is craved, from that which by evident signs and reasons we perceive to be approved of by God, although there be many who disapprove it, and though the giving of our approbation to it may disoblige those who otherwise pretend much friendship to us: for, those three Apostles, perceiving by most convincing evidences that God had called *Paul* to be an Apostle, they acknowledge him for such, though those who did cry them much up as pillars, (and what not?) did no doubt oppose their so doing, as tending evidently to the disadvantage of their cause; *They gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship.*

Verf. 10. Only they would that we should remember the poor, the same which I also was forward to do.

THe third thing in the event of that Meeting, which did also evidence, that *Paul* and the other Apostles did part good friends, and in all things one among themselves, was, That the other Apostles did earnestly recommend to *Paul* and *Barnabas* the collecting of some charity among the Churches of the Gentiles, *1 Cor. 16. 1.* to supply the poor Jews who were turned Christians, *Rom. 15. 25.* which they performed speedily and diligently. See the places cited, and *2 Cor. 8.* and *9.* chapters. *Dott. 1.* It is frequently the lot of those who are rich in Grace, to be poor in the things of a present life; and who are heirs of a Kingdom, (*Luke 12. 32.*) to be driven unto such straits, as they are forced to live upon some charitable supply from others; God seeing it convenient hereby to wean them from worldly contentments, that Heaven may be the more longed after, and
more

more sweet when it cometh : Thus the Christians in Judea, for the most part, were poor, and such as needed supply from the Gentiles ; *Only they would that we should remember the poor.* 2. Though those who are our own poor within the bounds where we live, are chiefly to be relieved by us, because of our nearer interest in such, 1 Tim. 5. 8. Yet, in cases of extremity, even those poor who live remote from us (because they are also of our own flesh, Isa. 58. 7. and members of the same mystical body, if Believers, Gal. 6. 10.) are also to be supplied by us : for, Paul was to stir up the Gentiles to contribute for the poor at Judea ; *Only they would that we should remember the poor.* 3. The care of the poor, and supply of the outward necessities of the Saints, is an employment not unworthy of the very chief Apostles, and which Ministers and other Officers of the Church ought to make conscience of : for, the care of the poor, was the last farewell of those Apostles : *Only they would that we should remember the poor, which Paul also was forward to do.* 4. The Ministers of Jesus Christ, ought to presse upon the People not only duties which are easie, and cost them nought ; but also those that are burdensome and expensive, especially that they would willingly give of those things which they enjoy, for the supply of others which want ; and are to be as forward in pressing the one sort of duties as the other, as being equally profitable to the Church, and most evidencing of an inward work of Grace in the heart, 1 Joh. 3. 17. Thus Paul was forward to presse upon the Gentiles to give some supply to the poor Jews ; *The same which I was also forward to do, or did speedily and diligently, as the word signifieth.*

Verf. 11. *But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.*

FROM this Verse to the 15. there is a further evidence of that Truth, which he had formerly asserted concerning the authority of his Office and his divine Doctrine, even in that point which was controverted be-

twixt him and his adversaries ; which he maketh appear from this. That, as an Apostle, and by vertue of his Apostolick Office, he did with Authority rebuke *Peter* one of the chief Apostles, when in his practice at *Antioch* he declined from the Doctrine taught by him concerning the abrogation of the Ceremonial Law, and that, for any thing which appeareth to the contrary, *Peter* in this debate did yeeld to *Paul*, as having Truth for him. This action of *Paul's* towards *Peter*, is first summarily propounded in this Verse, wherein *Paul* sheweth that boldly and freely he did oppose himself to *Peter*, and that because his carriage, as he doth clear more fully afterward, was most blame-worthy. *Doct. 1.* No band of friendship or confederacy, which parties have entred, no fear of occasioning the breaking-off of friendship (whatever may be the consequences thereof) ought to make those, who are so conjoynd, connive at others in a sinfull course, or withhold a testimony against that which is sinfull in their friend, when the hazard which may ensue from his sin to the Work and People of God, doth call for it : for, though *Paul* had come to *Jerusalem* of purpose to purchase a good understanding betwixt him and *Peter*, ver. 1, 2. and though they had given, not long since, mutual evidences of their harmony and agreement, ver. 9. and though their renting assunder, was the thing which adversaries to Truth would have been most glad of, as making much for the advantage of their bad cause ; Yet, not long after this agreement was made, when *Peter* falleth in a sin reproof-worthy, which had dreadfull consequences to the People and Work of God (as will appear afterward) following upon it, *Paul* doth freely and boldly give testimony against his sinful course ; But when *Peter* was come to *Antioch*, I withstood him to the face. 2. As the Ministers of *Jesus Christ* are bound to reprove sin and vice ; so they are to reprove it, first, with much boldnesse and resolution, not faintly, as if they were more feared for the offence of man, than grieved for the dishonour of God : so *Paul*, in reproving *Peter*,
withstood

withstood him : In the Original, it is a military word, and signifieth to stand against, whether it be by force of arms, or arguments : it is a word of defiance, and combating, as it were, hand to hand, face to face, and foot to foot, not yielding a hair breadth to the adversary, *Rom. 13. 2. Eph. 6. 13.* Secondly, with ingenuity and candor, so as not to conceal the man's fault only from himself, and in the mean time to speak of it broad and wide unto others for his prejudice, *Lev. 19. 16.* But they are to declare his sin even-down to himself, and rebuke him for it : Thus *Paul, withstood Peter to the face* : for, the word in the Original, doth not import that he withstood him only in shew, and for the fashion, making the beholders think they were serious when they were not, as some of the Ancients did alleage : such dissimulation had been most base in those two eminent Apostles, and *Paul* had not here spoken truly, affirming that *Peter* was *worthy to be blamed*, and *that he walked not uprightly* ; so the word must read, as it is here rendred, *to the face*, or to his face, as *2 Cor. 10. 1.* Thirdly, with certainty and knowledge of the deed reproved, both for the truth of the fact, and the vicious quality of it : *Paul* before he reproved, was assured of both these ; *Because he was to be blamed*, saith he. *Dott. 3.* The most eminent Saints on earth, are not free of their own sinful and blame-worthy failings ; that hereby they may be kepted humble, and from being lifted up with their gifts, graces, and other excellencies, *2 Cor. 12. 7.* and others may hereby learn not to think of them above what is written, *1 Cor. 4. 6.* for, even the Apostles themselves and Penmen of Scripture, though they could not erre in writing Scripture, being therein guided by the infallible assistance of the Spirit, *2 Pet. 1. 21.* Yet in other things they had their own sinful failings, as is evident in *Peter* ; *Because he was to be blamed.* 4. It is the part of every man, though never so eminent and esteemed of by others, when he meeteth with a just and deserved reproof, to stoop to it, without repining to imbrace it, and with silence to correct

rect the error, and amend the fault which is reprov'd : for, he that hateth reproof, shall die, *Prov. 15. 10.* So doth *Peter*, who, being sharply rebuked by *Paul*, defendeth not his fault, contendeth not with his reprover, but patiently taketh with his reproof, as appeareth from his silence ; for he replieth nothing.

Verſ. 12. For before that certain came from *James*, he did eat with the Gentiles : but when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the Circumciſion.

13. And the other Jews diſsembled likewise with him, inſomuch that *Barnabas* alſo was carried away with their diſimulation.

NExt, the Apoſtle enlargeth what he had briefly propounded : and, firſt, he ſheweth *Peter's* ſin for which he was reprov'd, to wit, that whereas before ſome Jews did come from *Jeruſalem*, where the Apoſtle *James* had his reſidence, *Peter* did keep fellowſhip with the Chriſtian Gentiles, and had eaten freely with them, (wherein he did right according to the Doctrin of Chriſtian Liberty, by which all differences of meats, and betwixt Jew and Gentile, are removed under the New Teſtament, as *Peter* himſelf was inſtructed by viſion, *Act. 11. 9.*) but when thoſe Jews did come, he did ſeparate from the Gentiles, as if it had been unlawful to eat with them, and this through fear of offending thoſe forementioned Jews, who were moſt tenacious of the Ceremonial Law, ver. 12. by which bad example of *Peter's*, the other Jews, which were at *Antioch*, were moved to withdraw from the Gentiles, as if it had been unlawfull to have intire fellowſhip with them ; Yea, and *Barnabas* alſo did the like, ver. 13. From whence we Learn, 1. Such influence have circumſtances upon our actions, that though an action, conſidered ſimply and in it ſelf, be not ſinfull ; Yet, by reaſon of accompanying circumſtances, it may become exceeding ſinfull : for, the exceeding ſinfulneſſe of

of Peter's action, for which he was here reprov'd, did not consist in his simple abstinence from certain kinds of meats, to eschew the offence of the weak; for, *Paul* did something like to this himself, *Act. 16. 3. and 21. 26.* but in the circumstances which did accompany that his abstinence, which will appear by pointing at some of those circumstances, whereby also the Text will be further cleared; as first, That he did withdraw from the Gentiles in eating, as if they had been no Church-members, with whom it was lawfull to have intire fellowship; *He withdrew, and separated himself.* Secondly, That he abstained not among the Jews at *Jerusalem*, which had been more tolerable, but at *Antioch*, where, a little before, he had openly done the contrary, in using his Christian Liberty: for, *before he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew.* Thirdly, That he did withdraw, not as if it had been a thing indifferent to have done so, or otherwise, and therefore would do it for a time to gain the Jews; but as if it had been a thing in it self sinful to have eaten with them, contrary to what himself knew, and was informed of by the heavenly vision; and therefore it is called dissimulation in him, while it is said, *The other Jews disssembled with him likewise.* Fourthly, That his abstinence was not for gaining of the weak Jews, whom he might afterwards have informed of the abrogation of these Levitical Ordinances, but from fear of losing esteem with, and incurring the hatred of, those who were spying-out their liberty, and would doubtlesse make bad use of that his abstinence, for confirming themselves in, and drawing over others to, their Errors; *Fearing them which were of the Circumcision.* Fifthly, That by his example he did hurt to the other Jews, who were beginning to be informed concerning the abrogation of the Ceremonial Law, and in evidence of it, had been eating with the Gentiles; but now, by this practice of Peter's, did again drink-in their former error; *And the other Jews disssembled likewise.* Sixthly, This practice of his (as is clear from the

the following 14. verse) did tend to force the Christian Gentiles to take on the yoke of the Ceremonial Law, (which had been most sinfull in them, they being never under it) as they would not have been debarred from the fellowship of Peter, and of the Church ; *Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as the Jews?* And, seventhly, He hereby gave a great dash to Paul's Doctrins, and the Doctrine of the Gospel concerning Christian Liberty, and the abrogation of the Ceremonial Law ; for, his practice did speak as much, as if it had been yet in force ; *He withdrew and separated himself, and the other Jews dissembled likewise.* *Doubt. 2.* So weak and unconstant are the best of men, that, being left to themselves, the least blast of temptation will make them break off the course of doing-well in the very midst, and, without respect had either to conscience or credit, openly to desert it : for, Peter having begun well in the use of Christian Liberty, by eating with the Gentiles, giveth evidence of great levity, in that for fear of man's offence he did presently slip from it ; *Before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles ; but when they were come, he withdrew.* 3. To separate from, and to break-off communion with, a true Church, and the received Members thereof, is such an act as cannot be attempted without sin, no not though hereby we could eschew the offence and stumbling of many : for, this was it that made Peter blame-worthy, even his separating from the Church of the Gentiles, as if it had been unlawful to keep communion with them, notwithstanding the Jews would have been offended if he had done otherwise ; *He withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the Circumcision.* 4. It is of great concernment to men of grace and parts, who are in publick place, and do enjoy the applause of many, to be both men of courage, and self-denied spirits ; and even when they enjoy the applause of all, to be dead and dying to it ; lest, if they conceit more of it than they ought, through their fleshly fear of losing applause and incurring hatred from men ; they

they venture upon the dishonour of God : for, even *Peter*, fearing too much his losse of esteem among the Jews, did sin against the Lord ; *He withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the Circumcision*, or the Jews, who are frequently so designed. 5. As good men sometimes, under the fit of a violent temptation, will in practice condemn that which in their judgment they do approve ; so for any to sin thus against their light, is an high aggravation of their guilt : for, this is the dissimulation wherewith *Peter* is charged, and whereby his sin is here aggregated : by his practice he pretended, that fellowship with the Christian Gentiles was unlawfull, in the contrary whereof, he was instructed by the heavenly vision, *Act. 11. 9. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him.* 6. Of so great force is the bad example of men, eminent, gracious and learned, that not only the weak and infirm, but even those who are strong, and richly endued both with grace and parts, will sometimes be corrupted by it : It is usual for us unawares to esteem of such, as of somewhat more than men, and being once that far engaged in our esteem of them, we do not so narrowly examine their actions, as we would of other men, Hence all is taken for current that cometh from them : thus not only the vulgar Jews, but even *Barnabas* himself, an eminent Apostle, (*Act. 13. 1, 2.*) was carried away with *Peter's* bad example ; *And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation :* and ver. 14. his example had a kind of compulsion in it towards the Gentiles, to make them do as he did ; *Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews ?* 7. A speat and inundation of evil examples, though even held forth by private Christians, especially if they be otherwise pious, is so impetuous, and of such force, to carry others along in their practice with it ; that even the very best of men can very hardly stand out against it : for, *Barnabas* his dissimulation, is ascribed not only to *Peter's* bad example, but also, if not mainly, to that influence which

which the evil example of these other Jews had upon him; *And the other Jews dissimulated likewise; insomuch that Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation.*

8. It is of great concernment unto all Superiours, and chiefly those who are eminent for piety and parts, to take diligent heed lest they give bad example unto others; and this not only because of what is partly expressed in the two former Doctrines, but also because the sins of others, which are occasioned by the evil example of any, will be justly charged upon him whose bad example they do follow: for, the dissimulation of the Jews and *Barnabas*, is mentioned as an aggravation of *Peter's* sin, which had such dreadful consequences; *And the other Jews dissimulated likewise.*

Verf. 14. *But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?*

SEcondly, The Apostle enlargeth what he said ver. 11. of his withstanding *Peter*; shewing that when he had perceived they walked not uprightly, or with a straight foot, according to the sincere Doctrine of the Gospel, without more ado he did openly fall upon *Peter*, whose example had given the occasion of that sin unto all the rest: and the fault which he chargeth him with, and that which did aggrege his sin most, was, that by his example he did constrain the Gentiles, as they would not have been cast out of *Peter's* fellowship and of the Church, to observe the Ceremonial Law of *Moses*, as the Jews did: the iniquity whereof he sheweth in this, that *Peter* himself, who was a Jew, and so more bound to observe the Ceremonial Law, which was given not to the Gentiles, but to the Jews, had cast off that yoke, and lived after the manner of the Gentiles, as is clear from ver. 12. and therefore there was no reason for
it,

it, that he should inforce that yoke upon others. *Deff. 1.* The multitude of those who swerve from Truth, should not make Truth the lesse lovely unto, or blunt the edge of others in the defence of it against Error: Though Truth should be deserted by all except one only, it is worthy to be owned, stood to, and defended by that one, and this against all who do oppose it: for, though *Peter*, the other Jews, *Barnabas* and all did dissemble, and halt from the Truth; Yet *Paul* alone doth stand for it: *And when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the Truth, I said unto Peter, &c.* 2. It is the duty of all professors to walk so both in the matter of opinion and practice, as is suitable unto, and well-agreeing with the sincere Truth of God, held out in the Gospel, even so, as that in opinion they hold nothing, which is, though but indirectly, contrary to that Truth, or in practice act nothing which may reflect upon that Truth; and when they halt, or walk not with a straight foot in either of those, they are blame-worthy: for, the fault of *Peter* and the rest, for which they are here reprov'd, was, *That they walked not uprightly*, or with a straight foot, *according to the truth of the Gospel.* Their practice and their opinion concerning the lawfulness of gratifying the Jews in the present business, did indirectly at least contradict and reflect upon that great Gospel-truth about the abrogation of the Ceremonial Law. 3. When many are guilty of one and the same sin, the Minister of *Jesus Christ* ought to reprove wisely and without respect of persons, making the weight of the reproof light upon them, as they have been more or less accessory to the sin: for, because *Peter's* example had been the occasion of sin to all the rest, *Paul* directeth the reproof to him by name, and this before the rest; that they might see themselves, indirectly at least, reprov'd also for following this bad example; *I said unto Peter before them all.* 4. Though private sins, which have not broken forth to a publick scandal of many, are to be rebuked in private, *Mat. 18. 15.* Yet, publick sins are to receive publick

lick rebukes ; that hereby the publick scandal may be removed, and others may be scared from taking encouragement from those sins to do the like, *1 Tim. 5. 20.* Thus, because *Peter* did sin publicly before all, *Paul*, by way of reproof, *said unto Peter before them all.* 5. Though the binding power of the Ceremonial Law was abrogated at *Christ's* death, and the practice thereof, in some things at least, left as a thing lawful, and in it self indifferent unto all for a time after that, (See ver. 4. doct. 1.) Yet the observation thereof, even for that time, was dispensed with more for the Jews sake, and was more tolerable in them who were born and educated under the binding power of that yoke, than in the Gentiles, to whom that Law was never given, and so were to observe it, or any part of it, only in case of scandalizing the weak Jews by their neglecting of it, *Rom. 14. 20, 21.* This difference betwixt Jew and Gentile, as to the practice of the Ceremonial Law, is gathered from the Apostle's way of arguing with *Peter*, from the lesse to the more ; *If thou, being a Jew, livest not as do the Jews,* to wit, in observing the Ceremonial Law. *Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?* Whereby he implyeth, that the observation of these Ceremonies was more to be comported with in the Jews than in the Gentiles. 6. It is a piece of unreasonable absurdity in a Minister, for which he can give no accompt neither to God nor man, to take liberty of practice to himself in those things which he doth condemn in others, and the contrary of which he doth either by his Doctrine or example at other times constrain them to, as appeareth from the question here propounded, *If thou livest not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?* as if he had said, Thou can neither answer to God nor man for it. 7. It is no small sin for Superiours to bind where the Lord hath left free, by urging upon their Inferiours the observing of a thing, in its own nature indifferent, as necessary ; except it be in these cases wherein the Lord, by those circumstances which do accompany

pany it, doth point it out as necessary ; such are the cases of scandal, *Act. 15. 28, 29.* and contempt, *1 Cor. 14. 40.* for, hereby mainly is Peter's sin aggregated, that he did compel the Gentiles to the necessary observation of the Ceremonial Law, though the use of it was at that time indifferent ; *Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews ?* 8. In the primitive times of the Christian Church, the People of God did wonderfully subject themselves to the Ministry of the Word in the hand of His Servants, and much more than People now do : for if the actions of the Apostles compelled men to do this or that, as Peter's act on did compel the Gentiles, what then did their Doctrine and heavenly Exhortations ? *Why compellest thou the Gentiles, &c. ?*

Verf. 15. *We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,*

16. *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the works of the Law: for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified,*

SOME Interpreters do conceive that *Paul's* speech to *Peter* doth yet continue in these two Verses ; Yea, and some think that it is extended to the end of the Chapter ; but others conceive, that *Paul*, having closed the narration of what passed betwixt him and *Peter*, ver. 14. doth here return to speak to the Galatians : and though those last do seem to have most of reason for them ; yet which of these opinions do stand, it is all one to the main purpose : for, it is clear that the Apostle doth here state and fall upon one of the main questions, which were betwixt him and his adversaries, to wit, That we are justified, or accepted of, and declared righteous in God's sight by Faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law.

And for the better understanding of the thread & method

of the Apostles dispute, together with the state of the present question, and the sense and force of those arguments which he maketh use of to confirm the Truth in controversy, We shall premit three things in general, First, the Apostle's adversaries erred in two things mainly, 1. they urged the rigid observation of the Ceremonial Law, as necessary by vertue of a divine Precept standing yet in force, as may be gathered from the Apostle's reasoning, chap. 3. 19, 25. and chap. 4. 3, 4, 5. 2. As Seducers wax worse and worse, 2 *Tim.* 3. 13. so they went higher, and urged the observation of these Ceremonies, as that whereby, joyntly at least with Christ, sinners are justified before God, as appeareth from chap. 2. 16, 21. and 3. 11. Now the Apostle addresseth himself to the refutation of both those Errors: and because the latter Error, to wit, That sinners are justified by their obedience to the Law, is most dangerous, therefore he doth refute it first, and apart, to ver. 19, chap. 3. And next, he refuteth that first Error joyntly with the other, proving there was no necessity at all of observing the Ceremonial Law, or any part of that Mosaical Pedagogie, now under the New Testament, and that it ought not now to be observed, the date prefixed by God for the observation of it being already expired, to ver. 13, chap. 5. Secondly, while the Apostle, all-along this dispute, denyeth we are justified, or that righteousness and the inheritance do come by the Law, he understandeth by the Law, not the whole Doctrine delivered by *Moses* upon Mount *Sinai*; for, the Law, being so taken, was a Covenant of Grace, as appeareth from the Preface and Promises of the Decalogue, and from the Ceremonial Law, which shadowed forth Christ and remission of sins through Him, *Heb.* 10. 4, 8, 9. so that Believers under the Old Testament may be said to have been justified, and to have had righteousness by the Law in this sense: for, it implyeth no further than that they were justified according to the tenour of the Covenant of Grace, as it was wrapped-up in that ancient legal dispensation. The
Apostle

Apostle therefore takes the Law more strictly, and, in the sense of his adversaries, for the mere precepts and threatenings of the Law, as it requires perfect obedience, and curleth those who have it not, abstracting from Christ, and Grace, which were held forth (though but obscurely) in it; for, in that sense his adversaries maintained justification by the Law, and therefore the Apostle while he refuteth justification by the Law, must be understood to speak of the Law in the same sense also, which sometimes he clearly expresseth, while he explaineth his meaning by denying we are justified by the works of the Law, vers. 16. and chap. 3. 5, 10. Thirdly, that the Apostle may strike at the root of this their most dangerous Error of Justification by Works, he excludeth all Works in general, not only those of the Ceremonial Law, but the Works also of the Moral Law; Yea, and all Works of ours whatsoever, from having influence upon Justification: for, as shall be observed in the Dispute it self, the Arguments used by the Apostle to prove that we are not justified by Works, are applicable to the Moral Law equally, if not more than to the Ceremonial Law; Yea, and do exclude the Works of the Regenerate, as well as of the Unregenerate: Besides, it is sure that none professing the Name of Christ, as the Apostle's adversaries did, would have urged the naked external performance of those Ceremonies, as having influence upon Justification, except as it was conjoyned with internal love to God and our neighbour, commanded by the Moral Law, and signified, expressed, and some one way or other advanced by those outward performances; Neither is it conceivable how they, maintaining a necessity of Faith in Christ, could imagine that any Works whatsoever, whether done in obedience to the Ceremonial Law, or to the Moral, being such Works only as are done by the power of Nature and strength of Free-will, without the Grace of Christ, should have justified a sinner, and made him righteous before God; So that if Paul in this Dispute had excluded from Justification

only the external Works of the Ceremonial Law, and not the Works of the Moral Law also, or only all Works whatsoever flowing from the strength of Nature, or, the Works of the Unregenerate, and not the Works of the Regenerate also, which are performed by the Grace of Christ, he should have quite mistaken the question, and not at all refuted his adversaries. It doth therefore of necessity follow, that the Apostle reasoneth against Justification by Works, done in obedience to the Law in general, and that he affirmeth we are justified only by Faith in opposition unto all Works of ours whatsoever; which he proveth by two Arguments in this Chapter. First, because he himself and other Jews, who, though they enjoyed by birth and education (as being born Members of the visible Church) many privileges beyond the Gentiles, who were profane sinners and born aliens from God; and therefore might have expected to be justified by their good works, if so any could be justified that way; Yet they (knowing perfectly that all their Works, done in obedience to the Law, could never justify or make them righteous before God, and that only Faith in Christ would make them so righteous) even they, who had as much reason to boast of their Works as any other, had renounced all confidence in their Works, and betaken themselves only to Faith in Jesus Christ for Justification, and hereby he leaveth unto them to gather what madnesse it were for those Galatians, or any other of the Gentiles, to rely upon the Works of the Law, so as to be justified by them; which he further confirmeth, as it seemeth, from *Psal.* 143. -2. affirming that no flesh, whether Jew or Gentile, shall be justified, to wit, by the Works of the Law, which is here supplied by the Apostle, without adding to the sense. The like addition of words for explication, without wronging the sense, is frequently used in the New Testament, where Scriptures are cited out of the Old, as *Mat.* 4. 10. compared with *Deut.* 6. 13. *Heb.* 10. 5. compared with *Psal.* 140. 7. *Doct.* 1. Though every man

man by nature, is a childe of wrath and enemy to God, *Eph. 2. 3.* as *Nature* speaketh that which is born with us, and conveyed unto us from our parents by carnal generation, *Psal. 51. 5.* Yet all those who are born within the visible Church, have a right by nature unto Church-priviledges and to enjoy the external means of Grace and Salvation as *Nature* speaketh that which is born with us, not of natural generation, but of free-grace, which God is pleased to honour His People with, and to deny unto others: for, the Apostle here calleth himself and others come of *Abraham*, who had been from that time upwards the only visible Church, *Psal. 147. 19, 20.* *Jews by nature*, wherby he doth not simply design them to be men of such a Nation; for, that could make nothing to the Apostle's scope in the present argument, besides that the *Jew* is here opposed to *sinners of the Gentiles*; so it must relate some way to their spiritual state, neither doth it import that much, as if they had inherent holiness, and were altogether sinlesse by nature: for, this is contradicted by Scripture, *Rom. 3. 9.* So the meaning must be, that from their birth, and because of God's love to them in making choice of them to be a Church to Himself above all Nations, *Deut. 7. 6.* they were (externally at least) in covenant with God, *Deut. 29. 11.* whereby they had a right to all Church-priviledges, as of being under God's special care and government, *Isa. 4. 5, 6.* of enjoying the ordinary means of Salvation, as they were capable of them, *Gen. 17. 12.* And as it was with the *Jews* then, so is it with those that are born within the visible Church now: they are *Christians* by birth, to wit, in the sense presently mentioned: for the visible Church under the New Testament, and among the Gentiles, hath succeeded to those priviledges, which were enjoyed by the Church under the Old, *Rom. 11. 17.* So that even young Infants are expressly called *boly*, *1 Cor. 7. 14.* to wit, with an external and federal holiness: and on this account they have right to Baptism, the seal of the Covenant, which no Infidel can claim, *Act. 2. 38, 39.* We

who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles;

2. The Doctrine of free Justification by Faith in Jesus Christ, and not by Works, was early opposed by Satan and heretical spirits, and no Doctrine so much opposed as it was, and that because no Truth is more necessary to be kept pure than this is, it being such a Truth as if it be kept pure, several other Truths are kept pure also; and if it fall, many other Truths do also fall with it: Therefore is it that Satan did so much labour, and yet laboureth to bear it down: for, the defacing of this Truth was mainly aimed at by the false Apostles among those Galatians, as appeareth from the Apostle his setting of himself so much to defend it; *That we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works of the Law*, saith he. 3. Concerning the nature of Justification, we learn several things; First, That Justification is not the Lord's making one, who was before unjust, to be just by working of habitual and inherent righteousness in him, as the Papists do take it, confounding Justification and Sanctification, contrary to Scripture, *1 Cor. 6. 11*. But it is a judicial action, whereby the Lord absolveth the sinner from death and wrath, and adjudgeth him to life eternal: for, the word expressing this grace here, is a judicial word taken from Courts of Justice, which, being attributed to the Judge, is opposed to condemn, *Rom. 8. 33, 34*. and so signifieth to absolve, and give sentence: neither doth the Scripture ever make use of this word in any other sense, where the justification of a sinner before God is spoken of; *Knowing that a man is not justified, &c. and that we might be justified*. Secondly, The ground whereupon, and the cause for which sinners are thus justified or absolved from wrath, and adjudged to life eternal, is not any Works which they do in obedience to the Law of God, whether Ceremonial or Moral: for, Works are excluded, while he saith, *A man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ*; it is not, except by the Faith, &c. as if Works were only excluded, when Faith is not joyned with

with them; as the Papists do read it; but the word is well turned here by the adverbative particle, *But*, as it is frequently in Scripture. See chap. 1. 7. *Mat.* 12. 4. So that Works are simply excluded, and Faith established, as only having hand in this business: which is more plainly asserted afterwards; *That we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works of the Law*: by which are meant both the Works of the Moral and Ceremonial Law, as we cleared in the Exposition. Thirdly, The Works which are excluded from having hand in Justification, are not only those which are done before conversion, but also which follow after, and flow from the working of God's Spirit in us; even those Works are imperfect, *Isa.* 64. 6. and so cannot make us compleatly righteous, and we do owe them to God in the meantime, *Luke* 17. 10. and so they cannot satisfie divine Justice for the failings of the bypast time, They are the work of God's Spirit in us, *Philip.* 2. 13. and so we can merit nothing at God's hand by them: for, He excludeth the Works of the Law in general; now the good Works of the Regenerate are such, as are commanded by the Law, and done in obedience to the Law, besides that those false Apostles did admit a mixture of Faith and Works in Justification, so that if the Apostle had not excluded even Works which flow from Faith, they might have quickly agreed upon the point; *Man is not justified by the Works of the Law.* Fourthly, That, through vertue whereof we are thus justified and absolved by God, is the righteousness of Jesus Christ, performed by Himself, while He was here on Earth, both in doing what we should have done, *Mat.* 3. 15. and suffering what we ought to have suffered, *Gal.* 3. 13. which righteousness is not inherent in us, but imputed to us, *Rom.* 5. 17, 18, 19. as the sum of Money paid by the Cautioner, standeth good in Law for the principal Debtor. So we are said to be justified by the Faith of Christ, or Faith in Jesus Christ, as laying hold upon His righteousness; which is imputed to us, as said is, and by which

only we are made righteous. Fifthly, Though Faith be not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces; for, it worketh by Love, chap. 5. 7. Yet Faith is that only grace which hath influence in our Justification: for, all other Works, even those that flow from Grace, are excluded, and only Faith admitted to have hand in this businesse; *A man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ, and, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works of the Law.* Sixthly, Faith hath influence upon our justification, not as it is a Work, or because of any worth which is in it self, more than in other graces, or, as if the act of believing, whether it alone, or joyntly with other graces, were imputed unto us for righteousness, but only as it layeth hold on Jesus Christ, and giveth us a right to His Righteousnesse, through the merit whereof alone we are justified: for, it is by the Faith of Jesus Christ, or, Faith receiving (*Joh. 1. 12.*) and resting on Jesus Christ (*Isa. 26. 3, 4.*) that we are justified; besides that all Works of the Law, or commanded by the Law, are here excluded, and by consequence Faith it self, as it is a work, is excluded also. Seventhly, This way of Justification by Free-grace accepting of us for the Righteousnesse of Jesus Christ, and not because of our own worth, is common to all who ever were, are, or shall be justified, whether good or bad: the most eminent and best of men must quit the conceipt of their own righteousness, and rely upon Him who justifieth the ungodly by Faith: for, even those who were Jews by nature, Paul and the other Apostles, betook themselves to this way; *Even we* (saith he) *have believed in Jesus Christ,* and the Scripture cited by Paul, speaketh universally of all; *For by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.* Eightly, Before man be justified through vertue of this imputed Righteousnesse, he must first be convinced of his own utter inability to satisfie divine Justice, and so to be justified by any thing which himself can do: So natural is it to seek for a righteousness of
of

of our own and in our selves, that we will never seek in earnest to the Righteousnesse of Christ until we be made to despair of our selves, *Rom. 10. 3.* for, the Apostle sheweth that this conviction went before their Justification; *Knowing that a man is not justified by the Works of the Law.* Next, he must be convinced also of a worth in Christ's Merit to satisfie divine Justice, and that this Merit of Christ's is offered to all, who shall lay hold on it by Faith, so as that it shall stand good in Law for them in order to their Absolution, as if they had given an equivalent satisfaction to God's Justice themselves; for, none will venture his immortal soul upon that, the worth whereof he doth not know. Hence the Apostle sheweth that the knowledge of this also did preceed their Justification; *Knowing that a man is not justified, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ.* And lastly, being thus convinced, he must by Faith receive and rest upon Jesus Christ and that most perfect Righteousnesse of His, by making his soul adhere and cleave to the Word of Promise, wherein Christ is offered, *Act. 2. 39, 41.* whereupon followeth the real Justification and Absolution of the man, who so doth: for Paul marketh this as a third thing going before their Justification; *Even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified. Doct. 4.* The former practices of ancient Believers, eminent for parts, privileges and graces, who have quit their own righteousness, and ventured their soul wholly upon this imputed Righteousnesse of Christ, laying hold upon it by Faith, ought to be looked on as a strong argument inforcing us to do the like: for, the Apostle's scope is to prevail with those Galatians by this argument; *We who are Jews by nature, saith he, have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified.* 5. Though the approved practices of eminent godly persons, may have their own weight in order to our encouragement to deny our selves and lay hold on Christ; Yet it is the Word of the Lord which can only quiet a man's conscience in this matter, and make his mind fully aquiesce to it: for, the Apostle unto their example

example subjoyneth a Scripture-confirmation of the Truth in hand; *By the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.*

Verf. 17. *But if while we seek to be justified by Christ, we our selves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.*

HE preoccupieth an Objection, which might have been framed against the present Doctrine, thus, If the Doctrine of Justification by Christ, doth suppose that even the Jews themselves, who are sanctified from the womb, are equally sinners with the Gentiles, and that, being unable to attain to Justification by the Works of the Law, they must only rely on Christ by Faith, as Paul had but presently affirmed, ver. 16. Then it would seem to follow, that Christ were the minister of sin; or, that the Doctrine of the Gospel did make men sinners, both by taking away that Righteousnesse of the Law, which the Jews thought they had, and were warranted, as they conceived, by the Scriptures of the Old Testament so to think, as also by furnishing both Jew and Gentile with an occasion to cast-by all care of Holinesse and good Works, seeing that thereby they were not to be justified, but by Faith in Christ only (See the like Objection propounded, *Rom. 3. 31.*) Which Objection the Apostle answereth, first, by repelling the Inference as absurd and blasphemous in this verse; and next, by confuting it in the following. *Doct. 1. The Ministers of Jesus Christ, in holding forth Truth, would carefully foresee, and prudently take off what atheistical, loose or erring spirits do usually object against it: to make it odious: so doth Paul here; But if while we seek, &c. 1.* It is too usual for people to conceive too much of their external Church-priviledges, as if by having them, they had saving Grace. and stood not in so much need of Christ's imputed Righteousnesse as others: for, this is that which the adversaries did stumble at, that the Jews by

by nature, who enjoyed so many rich priviledges, should be found sinners, and as unable to be saved by their own works as others: For if while we seek to be justified by Christ, we our selves are found also sinners. 3. Whatever be a mans priviledges otherwise, he must, if so he would be justified by Christ, take his confidence off them, and reckon himself equal to the most vile and worthlesse sinners, in the point of inability to merite any thing from God by his own Works: for, this is supposed, as that whereon their Objection is grounded, and Paul doth passe it as granted, and speaketh only against their Inference from it; But if while wee seek to be justified by Christ, we our selves are found also sinners. 4. It is no new prejudice, though a most unjust one, whereby the Doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, and nor by Works, hath been unjustly loaded, that of its own nature it doth tend to foster people in sin: The Papists do object so now, and the false Apostles did so of old; Is therefore Christ the minister of sin? say they, or, the Doctrine preached by Christ the occasion of sin? 5. To take occasion from Free-grace, or the Doctrine of it, to live in sin, is, so much as in us lyeth, to make Christ the minister of sin, and therefore a thing which all christian hearts should skunner at and abominate: for, in the place of saying the Doctrine of the Gospel doth occasion sin, it is said; Is Christ the minister of sin? And Paul doth abominate the very thought of it, rejecting it as most blasphemous and absurd; God forbid, saith he: it is a deniall, joynd with a detestation of the thing denied. So chap. 3. 21. and 1 Cor. 6. 15. Rom. 9. 14.

Verf. 18. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make my self a transgressor.

THE Apostle refuteth the former Inference, next, by some reasons taken from that indissoluble tie which is betwixt Justification and Sanctification, which he holdeth forth in his own person; that he may hereby pro-

propose himself an example unto others. The first, is, that *Paul*, in preaching the Doctrine of Justification, had joyntly with it prest the ruine and destruction of sin, as necessarily flowing from that Doctrine: and therefore if he should again build up sin; by giving way to the practice of it, he should contradict himself in what he had preached, not walking according to the Doctrine of the Gospel, but contrary to it: and so himself should be the transgressor, and the Gospel free from giving him any occasion so to be. *Doct. 1.* The Doctrine of Justification by Free-grace, cannot be rightly preached, except the Doctrine of Mortification and destroying of sin be joyntly preached with it: for, the same Faith which layeth hold on Christ for Righteousnesse, doth rest upon Him also for grace and strength to subdue corruption and sin, *Act. 15. 9.* and if He be not employed for the latter, He will not bestow the former: thus sin and corruption were those things which *Paul* destroyed, in so far as he did hold forth the most solid and ready way how to get them destroyed, while he taught the Doctrine of Justification; *If I build again the things which I destroyed.* 2. From this it followeth, that the untender lives of those who professe this Doctrine, do not reflect upon the Doctrine, as if in it self it did give occasion or encouragement unto them so to live; but upon themselves, who do not make the right use of that Doctrine, but abuse it, and walk quite contrary to what is prescribed by it: for, so doth *Paul* infer; *For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor*; or, the fault is not in the Doctrine, but in my self.

Verf. 19. For I through the Law am dead to the Law, that I might live unto God.

HERE is a second Reason by preoccupation of an Objection; for they might say, The Doctrine of Justification, as taught by *Paul*, did free Believers from the Law, *Rom. 7. 4.* and therefore did give them encouragement

ment to sin. The Apostle answereth, by granting they were freed from the Law, but denyeth that inference deduced from it, upon two reasons: and his Answer doth furnish us with three Doctrines which will further clear the meaning of the words. First, *Paul* and all Believers are dead indeed to the Law, that is, so, as they put no confidence in their obedience to it for their Justification, *Philip*. 3. 9. so, as they are freed from the condemning power of it, Chap. 3. 13. and as by its rigorous exaction of perfect obedience under hazard of the curse, which we were not able to perform, it did make us desperate and carelesse, and so did occasionally provoke and stir-up corruption in the heart, *Rom*. 7. 5. 6. *I am dead to the Law*. Secondly, It is the Law it self, which maketh them thus dead to the Law; the curse of the Law putting them so hard to it, that they are made to despair of getting Heaven and Salvation by their obedience to it, *Rom*. 3. 20, 21. and are forced to fly unto Christ, by being in whom, they are freed from condemnation, *Rom*. 8. 1. and get their corruption so far mortified, as that it taketh not occasion to sin the more from the Law's discharging of sin as it was wont, *Rom*. 6. 14. *For I through the Law am dead to the Law*. And, thirdly, Though Believers are delivered from the Law in the former respects; Yet not as it is the rule of an holy life: for, the very end of their freedom, is, That being so delivered, they might, by vertue of the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, live righteously and holily to the glory of God: for, saith he, *I am dead to the Law that I might live unto God*. By all which, it doth evidently appear, That the Doctrine of Justification in it self, doth give no encouragement to sin: which answereth the Objection, and refuteth the blasphemous Inference, which is made, ver. 17.

Verſ. 20. *I am crucified with Chriſt. Nevertheleſſ I live ; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me ; and the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himſelf for me.*

HERE is a third Reason to the ſame purpoſe with the former, ſhewing more fully that juſtified perſons are moſt ſtrictly tyed to mortify ſin and lead an holy life, if ſo they walk according to the preſcript of the Doctrine of Juſtification which was taught by *Paul* : for he, and by conſequence all real Believers, were crucified with Chriſt, to wit, the old man of their indwelling corruption, *Rom. 6. 6.* it did receive the ſtroke of death by His death, He having by death redeemed them from the ſlavery of it, *Tit. 2. 14.* which crucifixion with Chriſt, doth not deſtroy the natural life of Believers ; for ſo *Paul* ſheweth he did live : only the old man of corruption doth not live in them, ſo, as to act them in what they do, but Jeſus Chriſt doth live in them, He being united to them, as the root to the branches, or head to the members, and furniſhing them with ſpiritual life and motion, whereby the very natural life, which they live, and thoſe things which concern that life are ordered and gone about by vertue of ſtrength drawn from Chriſt, by Faith in Him : and the conſideration of Chriſt's love to them, and His dying for them, becauſe he loved them, is a great inducement unto juſtified perſons ſo to live. Now, this being true in *Paul*, and in ſome meaſure in all Believers, and ſeing the principles of the Doctrine of Juſtification did bind all to this, It is evident, that to affirm this Doctrine did tend to foſter ſin, is but a ſoul-forged calumny. *Doct. 1.* As Jeſus Chriſt did die a moſt ſhameful, painful and curſed death upon the croſſe, *Gal. 3. 13.* ſo in His dying He did ſtand, not as a private, but as a publick perſon in the room and place of all the Elect ; for He was their ſurety, *Heb. 7. 22.* and died for them, *Joh. 11. 50.* ſo that when they lay hold
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upon Him by Faith, and thereby are made one with Him, *Eph. 3. 17* the crosse and passion of Christ, as to all those benefites which were purchased by it, whether in order to the removal of the guilt of sin (*Mat. 26. 28.*) or to the subduing of its strength, and quickning of them in the way of holinesse (*2 Cor. 5. 15.*) or to the purchasing of life eternal for them, (*Joh. 3. 16.*) is as verily made theirs, as if they had been crucified in their own persons: for, *Paul* saith of himself, as an instance of all Believers, *I am crucified with Christ.* 2. The former consideration of the Believer's right to Christ's purchase, in order to the subduing of sin, layeth a strong engagement on him, and giveth a great encouragement unto him to oppose, resist, and set a bowe the mortification of sin in himself: for, *Paul* maketh this an argument to prove that the Doctrine of Justification, in its own nature, is no friend to sin; because, according to the principles thereof, the justified person is crucified with Christ. 3. God's infinite wisdom hath found out the way whereby the threatening of death (*Gen. 2. 17.*) is fulfilled in the Elect, so that they die, and yet their lives are spared; they die, and yet they live: for, they are reckoned in Law to have died, when Christ their Surety died for them; so that He was taken, and they go free, *Joh. 18. 8.* thus is that riddle solved, which is here propounded by *Paul*, *I am crucified with Christ, yet I live.* 4. Though notwithstanding of fulfilling the threatening of death upon the Elect, they do live; yet upon their believing in Jesus Christ, the old man of corruption and power of sin is so far weakened in them, that it doth not bear the chief sway in their hearts, to command, execute, and order all their actions, as formerly it did, *Gen. 6. 5;* for, thus is that other riddle solved, which is here propounded, *Notwithstanding I live, yet not I,* to wit the old I: the body of death and corruption did not live in him, but was mortified, and the dominion thereof removed; *Rom. 6. 14.* *Diss. 5.* The Doctrine of Justification by Free-grace, revealed in the Gospel, layeth on strong obligations upon
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the justified person to set about the whole duties of Sanctification, not only those, which relate to the mortifying of sin, but also to his quickning in the way of grace: both those must go together, and the justified man is obliged to both; and furnished with help and encouragement from the Doctrine of Justification to set about both: for, *Paul* sheweth they were both conjoynd in himself; the first, while he saith, *Nos I live*; the second, while he saith, *Christ liveth in me*: whereby is meant his following the motions of Christ's Spirit, as the guide of his life, *Rom. 8. 1.* and this he speaketh of himself, as a thing that he was obliged unto, and furnished for by the Doctrine of Justification which he taught; otherwise he should not have refuted the calumny of his adversaries. 6. That Christians may live the spiritual life of grace, they must, 1. be united to Christ, and have Christ dwelling in them by Faith, *Eph. 3. 17.* for, speaking of the spiritual life which he lived, he supposeth Christ to be in him; *But Christ liveth in me.* 2. Besides this union with Christ, there must be a communication of influence from the Spirit of Christ to excite them unto, (*Cant. 5. 2.*) enable them for, (*John. 15. 5.*) make them persevere (*Philip. 1. 6.*) and effectually to order and direct them in (*Philip. 4. 13.*) the practice of every thing that is spiritually good: for, this is to have Christ living in them, to wit, as the head in the members, or root in the branches, which do furnish the members and branches with all things necessary for life and growth: and Christ's quickning of Believers in the way of grace, is frequently set forth by similitudes drawn from those, *Col. 2. 19. Job. 15. 5.* 3. The Believer, if so he would live this spiritual life, must not only have the habit of Faith in his heart, but also must keep it in daily exercise, so as first thereby to try what he is to do, if so it be warranted by the Word of Truth, and how it is to be circumstantiated, *Rom. 14. 23.* Secondly, thereby to draw furniture from the Spirit of Christ for exciting, enabling, and directing him in the way of duty, *2 Cor. 3. 5.* And, thirdly, to
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apply pardoning mercy for covering the defects of duty, when he hath gone about it, and for removing the guilt of all his other sins, *Mat. 6. 11.* for, this is to live by the Faith of the Son of God, or, in the Son of God, which Paul speaketh of as a necessary ingredient in this spiritual life. 4. This spiritual life, and life of Faith, must be extended not only to spiritual duties, and of God's immediate Worship, but also to all the actions of our natural and temporal life, in so far as they fall under a Command, even to our eating and drinking, *1 Cor. 10. 31.* duties of our lawful imployments, *Heb. 11. 33.* and to our carriage under crosses, *Heb. 11. 24, 25.* for, by the life which Paul lived in the flesh, is meant this natural life, *Heb. 5. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 2.* and his living this spiritual life of Faith, was extended even to the things of that life; *The life which I now live in the flesh, is by the Faith of the Son of God. Doct. 7.* As Jesus Christ did give Himself a Ransom for the Elect, (See chap. 1. 4.) so no worth in us, no good which He expecteth from us, or need which He stood in of us, but only love in Him to us did move Him so to do; *He loved me, and gave Himself for me. 8.* Though the full perswasion and assurance of Christ's special love unto, and His dying for me in particular, is not the very essence and being of saving Faith, *Eph. 1. 13.* for, saving Faith may be without it, *1sa. 50. 10.* Yet it is a thing which may be had without extraordinary revelation, the Spirit of God enabling the Believer to discern in himself those graces (*1 Cor. 2. 12.*) which are set down as marks of His special love and favour in Scripture, *1 Job. 3. 14, 18, 19, 21, 24.* and bearing witness with His Spirit that he is a childe of God, *Rom. 8. 16.* and this assurance should be aimed at in the right method by all, *2 Pet. 1. 10.* for, Paul, speaking in the name of other Believers, sheweth he had attained it; *Who loved me, and gave Himself for me,* saith he. 9. This full perswasion and assurance, in its own nature, is so far from making those, who have it, loose the reigns to wickednesse and security, that upon the contrary, it serveth

as a strong incitement to make them mortifie sin and live that spiritual life of Faith which is here spoken of: for, it served for this use unto Paul; *I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.*

Verf. 21. *I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.*

HAVING removed the objection, the Apostle proceedeth to establish Justification by Faith, and not by the Works of the Law, by a second argument, to this purpose, If we be justified by the Law, or works done in obedience to the Law, Then those two absurdities would follow, 1. God's free grace and favour should be rejected, despised, frustrated and made uselesse, (for the word signifieth all these) and the reason of the consequence lyeth in this, That if Justification be by Works, Then it cannot be by Grace, *Rom.* 11. 6. 2. Christ's death had been in vain without any necessary cause or reason, if the Justification of sinners could have been attained by Works or by any other mean. *Doct.* 1. They who have attained unto the perswasion and full assurance of God's favour and love in Christ, ought above all others, to maintain the glory of His Grace and Mercy in saving of sinners freely, not admitting of any thing, whether in practice or opinion, whether in themselves, or, so far as is possible, in others, which may inroach upon it, obscure it, or weaken the thoughts of the excellency of it in the minds of men: for, Paul, who was perswaded of Christ's love, ver. 20. doth look upon this as his duty, flowing from that assurance; *I do not frustrate the Grace of God*, saith he. 2. The joyning of Works with Faith in the matter of Justification, is a total excluding of God's Free-grace and favour from having any hand in this Work: for, Grace admitteth of no partner; so that if Grace do not all, it doth nothing; if any thing be added to it, that addition maketh Grace to be no Grace, *Rom.* 4. 4. for, the Apostle, reasoning against those who would have

have made Works to share with God's Free-grace and favour in Justification, sheweth his joyning with them in that opinion, would be a total rejecting, and making uselesse of God's Grace; *I do not frustrate the Grace of God.* 3. That the Apostle doth exclude in this dispute from having any influence in Justification, the Works, not only of the Ceremonial, but also of the Moral Law, appeareth from this, That he opposeth the Merit of Christ's death, to all Merit of our own, whether by obedience to the one Law, or to the other; neither can any reason be given for which our meriting by obedience to the Ceremonial Law maketh Christ to have died in vain, which is not applicabl. to the Moral Law: *For, if righteousness come by the Law, then Christ died in vain.* 4. That he excludeth also, not only the Works of the Moral Law, which are performed by the natural and unregenerate man, but also those which the Godly do perform by vertue of Faith drawing influence from Christ, appeareth from this, that the Apostle useth this argument taken from the uselesse of Christ's death, not against the unconverted Jews, (who had not received the Gospel, and so would easily have granted, that Christ was dead in vain) but against those who had received the Gospel, and so would never have pleaded that any Works done by a natural man, but those only which flow from the Grace of Christ, could justifie a sinner; and yet Paul reasoneth against those, *If righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.* 5. That he doth exclude also all Works of ours whatsoever from being the meritorious cause of our Justification, not only in whole and their alone without the Merit of Christ, but also in part and joynly with His Merit, appeareth from the former ground that he is reasoning against professed Christians, who doubtlesse did give Christ's Merit and Death some share at least in Justification; else the absurdity, which is deduced from their Doctrine by Paul, should have had no weight with them, as being no absurdity in their mind; *Then Christ is dead in vain.* 6. If

there had been any other way possible in Heaven or Earth, by which the Salvation of lost sinners could have been brought about, but by the Death of Christ, then Christ would not have died; our disease was desperate as to any other cure: for, while he saith, *If righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain*, he affirmeth two things, 1. That to suppose Christ hath died in vain, or without cause, is a great absurdity no wayes to be admitted of. 2. If the Justification and Salvation of sinners could have been attained by Works, or any other mean, then His Death had been in vain; and so that it were an absurd thing to suppose he would have died in that case.

CHAP. III.

IN the first part of this Chapter, the Apostle (having sharply rebuked these Galatians for their defection, ver. 1.) useth five other Arguments to prove that we are justified by Faith, and not by Works. First, They had received the saving Graces of God's Spirit, by hearing the Doctrine of Justification by Faith, and not by Works, ver. 2. Which Argument, is further urged, ver. 3, 4. and enlarged unto their receiving these other miraculous Gifts of the Spirit by the means of that Doctrine, and as confirmations of it, ver. 5. Secondly, *Abraham* was justified by Faith, ver. 6. From which he inferreth, that Believers are *Abraham's* children, ver. 7. and that all of them, whether Jew or Gentile, must be justified by Faith also, ver. 8, 9. Thirdly, Those who seek to be justified by the Law, are under the curse of the Law; and therefore not justified, ver. 10. Fourthly, Scripture testifieth that men shall be justified by Faith, ver. 11. Whence he inferreth and proveth his Inference, that therefore they cannot be justified by the Law, ver. 12. Fifthly, Christ's redeeming of us from the curse of the

the Law, and all the fruits following upon His Death, are received by Faith, ver. 13, 14.

In the second part of the Chapter, he answereth some Objections, and joyntly sheweth the date prescribed by God, for keeping the Ceremonial Law, was now past.

Object. 1. It seemeth the way of Justification by Faith in the Promise made to *Abraham* was changed by the Law given upon Mount *Sinai*. He answereth by a similitude taken from humane Covenants, ver. 15. that the Covenant of Grace made and ratified by God with *Abraham* in Christ, could not be altered nor abrogated by the Law, which was given so long after, ver. 16, 17, 18.

Object. 2. The Law seemeth to be given in vain and to no purpose, if it do not justifie. He answereth by shewing another end for which the Law was given, to wit, for the discovery and restraint of sin; and that God's design was not, that people should be thereby justified, ver. 19, 20.

Object. 3. The Law seemeth then to be contrary to the Covenant-promise, if the one discover sin, and the other forgive and cover it. He answereth, first, retorting the Objection against the Propounders, to wit, that by their way the Law would be contrary to, and destructive of the Promise, ver. 21. Secondly, shewing the Law in discovering sin, and condemning for it, was subservient to the Promise, while it did necessitate guilty sinners to believe, and apply the Promise, ver. 22.

Object. 4. It seemeth the Ceremonial Law, and the whole ancient dispensation ought to be observed under the Gospel for the same use and end at least. He answereth, shewing the Law was for good use to the ancient Church, ver. 23. which he illustrateth by comparing the Law to a Schoolmaster, ver. 24. but denieth that therefore it should be observed now; because the Church was come to perfect age, and so could not be any longer kept under a Schoolmaster, ver. 25, 26.

Object. 5. It seemeth Circumcision at least ought to be observed; seeing it was not added upon Mount *Sinai*, but instituted long before. He answereth, shewing that Baptism doth

serve for all those spiritual uses now, which Circumcision did serve for then; and consequently that Circumcision was not to be any longer practised, ver. 27, 28, 29.

Verf. 1: *O Foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the Truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?*

THe Apostle (being to insist further upon the former dispute, lest their assertions had been thereby rendred dead and dull) quickeneth them a little, by inserting a sharp reproof, wherein he chargeth them with folly, in that they had suffered themselves to be seduced, by a sort of spiritual sorcery or witchcraft, unto disobedience to the Doctrine of the Gospel; which disobedience he aggregeth from the perspicuity and plainness in which that Doctrine was preached unto them, even such, as if Christ, together with His bloody passion, had been drawn and painted upon a board before them. *Doct. 1.* The Minister of Jesus Christ, when he is called to insist upon the clearing-up of Truths unto the understanding, whether positively, by shewing what is revealed in Scripture concerning them, or, controvertally, by refuting contrary Errors, would mix his discourse with an occasional word of Exhortation, Reproof, or somewhat of that kind, which may tend more immediately and directly to excite and quicken the affections of hearers, lest they otherwise wax dull and languish: for, *Paul* casteth in a sharp reproof in the midst of his dispute, *O foolish Galatians, &c.* 2. Where the precious Truths of the Gospel are preached, and disobeyed, People neither labouring to be perswaded of the Truth in their understandings, *Act. 17. 32.* nor to prize it in their heart and affections, *Matth. 11. 17.* nor to practise it in their life and conversation, *Matth. 7. 26.* this is a sin, the evil whereof cannot be sufficiently aggregated,

gregated, or spoken against, as being a sin against the remedy of sin, *Heb. 2. 3.* for, this is the fault for which the Apostle doth so sharply reprove those Galatians, even *that they did not obey the Truth*: the word signifieth, the not believing of, and disobedience to the Truth when it is believed. 3. Hereticks, who by fair words deceive the simple, (*Rom. 16. - 18.*) are a kind of spiritual Sorcerers; and Heresie and Error is spiritual Witchcraft: For, first, as Sorcerers, by deluding the senses, make people apprehend that they see what they see not; So Hereticks and erring spirits, by casting a mist of seeming reason before the understanding, do delude it, and make the deluded person beleive that to be Truth which is not, chap. 1. 6, 7. And secondly, as Sorcerers, in what they do of that kind, are in a singular manner assisted beyond the reach of their own ability and skill by the Devil, who really doth the thing upon the Sorcerers practising of some Satanical ceremonies, which are prescribed unto them by the Devil, as a watchword whereat he is ready to answer: So heretical spirits are often more than ordinarily assisted in drawing of multitudes after them, and this by Satan's concurring with them, *2 Thess. 2. 9.* Thus the Apostle, speaking of that influence which false Teachers had upon them, in drawing them from the Truth, he saith, *Who hath bewitched you?* It's a word borrowed from the practice of Witches and Sorcerers, who, being assisted by the Devil, use to cast mist before the eyes to dazle, and so delude them. 4. For a people to have the Gospel among them, and not to make use of it, but to reject it, and make defection from it, argueth them to be fools indeed, whatever be their wisdom otherwise in things relating to this present life: for, the Doctrine of the Gospel containeth saving Wisdom, which maketh wise unto Salvation, *2 Tim. 3. 15.* which Wisdom they reject. Thus Paul calleth them *foolish Galatians*, because they obeyed not the Truth. 5. Though neither Ministers, nor any other, ought to charge men with folly, with a mind to reproach them, or in way

of private revenge, *Mat. 5. 22.* Yet the Minister of Jesus Christ, or any other who hath a Call to it, may upbraid a man with folly, if, first, the party reprov'd be guilty of folly, as those Galatians were. Secondly, if the reproof flow from love and compassion in the person who doth reprove, and an honest desire after the sinner's good, as it was here: for, he casteth not up their folly in passion, but in compassion, desiring nothing but their good and amendment. Thirdly, if the reproof carry along all lawfull and allowed moderation with it, as here, he calleth them not *wicked*, but more gently, *foolish* or imprudent, and withall layeth the great weight of their sins upon their Seducers, who had *bewitched* them. And, fourthly, That the reprov'r not only himself do know that there is reason so to charge them, but also hold forth these reasons to them, that they may be convinced also: for, so doth *Paul*, he demonstrateth their folly, from that they obeyed not the Gospel, which was so plainly preached among them; *O foolish Galatians, &c. Doct. 6.* Ministers ought not to rest upon a coldrise way of preaching Truth, *Mat. 7. -29.* but are to endeavour the delivery of it, with that perspicuity and plainnesse, *Col. 4. 4.* that power and liveliness, *1 Cor. 2. --4.* as it may penetrate the conscience of the hearers, and be so clear and evident to them, as if it were pictured and painted out before their eyes: and in order to this, they would not only labour to understand thoroughly what they preach, *1 Tim. 1. 7.* but also to believe it themselves, *2 Cor. 4. 13.* and to have their own affections in some measure warmed with love to it, *1 Tim. 1. 15.* And above all, would labour with God, that the effectuall operation of His Spirit may come along with what they preach, *1 Cor. 2. -4.* that so the Truth delivered may be the more lively, and convincingly represented to the hearers: for, *Paul* did so preach; *Jesus Christ* was evidently set forth, crucified among them, before their eyes: He did so represent Christ and Him crucified to their ears, by the preaching of the Word, as if they had seen Him with

with their eyes. 7. Though Jesus Christ and His sufferings are to be painted out, vividly represented and pictured by the plain and powerful preaching of the Gospel; Yet it doth not follow, that they are to be artificially painted with colours upon stone or timber, for religious use: for, God commandeth the former, but condemneth the latter, *Exod. 20. 4.* And, the graven image is but a teacher of lies, *Hab. 2. 18.* *Doct. 8.* The more clearly and powerfully that the Gospel hath been preached among a People, their defection from it, and not giving obedience to it, is the more aggregated: for, *Paul* aggregeth their not obeying the Truth, from this, that *before their eyes, Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth, crucified among them.*

Verf. 2. This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?

THe Apostle, having stirred them up to attention by a reproof, doth now return to his former dispute, proving that we are justified by Faith, and not by Works, (See chap. 2. 16.) And this he proveth, first, because the Spirit of Regeneration and other saving Graces of the Spirit of God (called here the *Spirit*, as being fruits of the Spirit, chap. 5. 22.) were wrought in those of them, who were regenerate, not by the works of the Law, that is, by the Doctrine of Justification by Works, but by the hearing of Faith, that is, by hearing the Doctrine of Justification by Faith: for here, as usually elsewhere, (See chap. 1. 23.) Faith is taken for the Doctrine that is believed: And for the truth of this assertion, he appealeth to their own conscience and experience, leaving them to gather, that therefore they were justified and reconciled by the Doctrine of Faith; seeing God bestoweth His Spirit upon none but such as are reconciled unto Him, *Rom. 5. 1, 2, &c. Doct. 1.* There is not ordinarily any Church so corrupt, but God hath some who are truly gracious among them: for, *Paul's* Argument supposeth that

that *the Spirit*, and saving graces of the Spirit, were in some of those Galatians, because of whom, he speaketh generally unto all; *Received ye the Spirit?* saith he. 2. Even those who are truly gracious, may stagger strangely in reeling times, and be in a great measure overtaken with the most dangerous Errors of the times, though they cannot totally (1 Pet. 1. 23.) nor finally (Isa. 54. 7, 8.) fall away: for, Paul speaketh even to them who had received the Spirit, as to those who were taken with the common Errors; *Received ye the Spirit?* 3. As Regeneration and saving Grace is the work of God's Spirit in the Elect; So the ordinary mean whereby He conveyeth Grace to the heart, is, by hearing the Word preached: for, they had *received the Spirit by the hearing of Faith*. 4. Though the hearing of the Law preached, doth work conviction of sin, terror of conscience, and legal contrition, Act. 2. 37. whereby the heart is in some sort prepared for receiving of the Gospel; Yet the Law, as distinct from the Gospel, and as it presseth perfect obedience in order to our Justification before God, (in which sense it was mistaken by the false Apostles, and is so spoken of in this dispute; See upon chap. 2. 15.) can never be a mean of begetting Grace in the heart; for so it driveth the soul to despair, and worketh wrath, Rom. 4. 15. Thus the Apostle affirmeth, they *received not the Spirit by the works of the Law*. 5. It is the Gospel preached and heard, which the Lord maketh use of, as a mean for conveying Grace to the heart, being first convinced of sin and misery, by the preaching of the Law, Act. 2. 37, 38. for, the Gospel offereth Christ freely, from whom, being laid hold upon by Faith, we do all receive Grace for Grace, Job. 1. 16. Thus the Apostle affirmeth they had *received the Spirit by the hearing of Faith*. 6. Though a gracious heart, may be overtaken with Error, as said is, (See Doct. 2.) Yet there remaineth somewhat of conscience in vigour with them, in so far as that being appealed unto, about the truth of things weighty, and which belong to the reality of

of God's work in their heart, and the way of His working in them, they dare not readily lie, and contradict their own known experience : for, *Paul* at least supposeth so much, while he doth appeal to their own conscience and experience how saving Grace was wrought in them; *This only would I learn of you, Received ye, &c.* 7. Our Justification before God, and the renovation of our natures by the Spirit of God, are so much conjoynd, that the Doctrine, which, through God's blessing, is the mean of working the former, is also the only Doctrine appointed of God, for holding forth the right way of attaining the latter : for, *Paul* argueth, that the Doctrine of Justification without Works, is divine ; because that Doctrine was the mean of conveying sanctifying Grace unto their hearts ; as appeareth from the scope of the Argument here used, *Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith ?*

Verf. 3. *Are ye so foolish ? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh ?*

HERE is an Inference from the former Verse, That seeing their beginning in the way of Christianity was spirituall, (the Doctrine of Justification by Faith having communicated the Spirit of Regeneration, and other Graces to them, as ver. 2.) it should be an act of extream folly and madnesse in them to quit that Doctrine, and to imbrace the Doctrine of Justification by Works, as if they could be perfected by it ; seeing it is but a fleshly dead Doctrine, and therefore is here called *flesh*, because flesh and corrupt nature do plead and stand for it, *Rom.* 10. 3. and because it doth produce no spiritual effect, but rather the contrary in the soul who doth imbrace it, *Rom.* 7. 5. *Doct.* 1. The Text speaketh nothing against the Doctrine of Perseverance, as if those who were once renewed, and truly spiritual, might lose the Spirit of God altogether, and turn fleshly : For besides, first, that the Apostle doth not positively assert, that they were

were changed already, but only, by way of question, holdeth out the hazard which should follow upon their change. Secondly, he speaketh not of a change of qualities or dispositions from good to bad, but in their judgment, from the Doctrine of Faith, here called the *Spirit*, to the Doctrine of Justification by Works, here called *flesh*. Thirdly, though he did imply a change of qualities and disposition from *spirit* to *flesh*, and from holiness to sin, as a consequence of this change of judgment and opinion; Yet there is nothing here importing that any total or final change of that kind, either had fallen, or could fall upon those who were truly gracious.

2. The Doctrine maintained by the Papists now, That Faith in Jesus Christ doth begin our Justification, in so far as it disposeth us unto good works, and that by those our Justification is compleated, is no new error, but that which hath been held of old by these Hereticks, who had seduced the Galatians, and whom *Paul* here refuteth: for, he supposeth, that in answer to the present argument, they might readily affirm, that though the Doctrine of Faith (here called the *Spirit*, as 2 *Cor.* 3. --6.) did begin the work; yet the Doctrine of Works, here called *flesh*, did perfect it; *Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?* 3. The fore-mentioned Doctrine, hath so many absurdities following upon it, That the imbracing of it doth argue no lesse than folly and madness: for, Justification by Faith and Works, cannot consist, *Rom.* 11. 6. much lesse can the former take its perfection from the latter, the more noble from that which is more base: hence *Paul* condemneth it of folly; *Are ye so foolish* (saith he) *having begun, &c.* 4. Our after-carriage, and walking in the things of God and religious matters, ought to be conform to our good beginnings, which we once had in those; and the contrary hereof, is incomparable folly and madness: for, he saith, *Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*

Verſ. 4. *Have ye ſuffered ſo many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.*

HE cleareth what he ſaid of the folly and madneſſe, which is in following the way preſently ſpoken of, by ſhewing, if they ſhould hold on to ſeek Juſtification by Works, or partly by Faith, and partly by Works, they would loſe all the fruit of their former conſtancy and ſufferings, ſuſtained by them for that Truth which he did now preach; this he ſpeaketh not poſitively, but as it were doubtingly, and ſuſpending its certainty, upon the hopes he had of their amendment. *Doct. 1.* It is the lot of thoſe who profeſſe Truth, to ſuffer many things in the defence of it. See chap. 1. ver. 13. doct. 6. The Galatians found the truth of this, *Have ye ſuffered ſo many things?* 2. They may ſuffer many things for Truth, who afterwards will make ſoul defection from it: for, as the example of others, particular intereſt, wrapt up in the publick, and the general applauſe which ſufferers for Truth do receive from the lovers of Truth, will make even Hypocrites ſuffer much; ſo, continued ſufferings, will make even the godly faint for a time; yea, the beſt, being left to themſelves, in an hour of temptation, will turn their back upon Truth, ſo that no engagements by a profeſſion, no experience or remembrance of that joy and ſweetneſſe, which they have found in the way of Truth, nor yet their former ſufferings for Truth, will make them adhere unto it: for, theſe Galatians had ſuffered many things for the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith; yea, and had found much ſweetneſſe and ſatisfaction in it, chap. 4. 15. and yet now they have made defection from it; *Have ye ſuffered ſo many things in vain?* 3. Afflictions and ſufferings for the Truth, are very uſeful and profitable to the ſufferers, though not to ſatisſie God's juſtice for ſin, neither in its guilt nor puniſhment, neither eternal nor temporal; for, theſe are fully done away in Chriſt, *Iſa. 53. 5.* Yet for other ends,

as for the trial of their Faith, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. for conforming them to Christ their head, *Philip.* 3. --10. who was a man of sorrows, *Isa.* 53. 3. for making them die to the world, chap. 6. 14. and to fit them for Heaven; afflictions and crosses being the beaten way which leadeth to it, *Act.* 14. 22. for, while he saith, *Have ye suffered so many things in vain?* he importeth their sufferings would have been usefull for them, if they themselves had not hindered it. 4. Whatever have been the sufferings of a people or person for Truth, they are all in vain, lost, and to no purpose, as to anything which can be expected from God to the party who hath suffered, if so he make defection from, and turn his back upon Truth afterwards: for, *Paul* insinuateth this as an undoubted Truth, while he saith, *Have ye suffered so many things in vain?* 5. Though these who have suffered much for Truth, should after ward make defection from it, we are nevertheless to keep charity towards them, as hoping God will give them repentance, and reclaim them: Yea, all our sharpnesse towards them, whether in aggreging their sin, or in holding out the terrible consequences which are deserved by, and probably will follow upon, their sin, ought to be wisely tempered, by expressing those charitable thoughts which we have of them: for, so doth the Apostle here, while, speaking of these Galatians, who had formerly suffered much for Truth, and threatening them for their present defection with the losse of all those advantages which they might have expected from their sufferings, he suspendeth the certainty of the threatening, upon their hoped-for repentance; *If it be yet in vain,* saith he.

Verf. 5. *He therefore that ministreth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doth He it by the works of the Law, or by the bearing of Faith?*

HE again returneth to the Argument for Justification by Faith; set down, ver. 2. and enlargeth it thus, That the Lord had not only accompanied that Doctrine among

among them with the fruits of the Spirit of Regeneration and saving Graces, wrought by it, but also with other extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, such as the working of miracles, speaking with strange tongues, curing of diseases, which were so many confirmations, that the Doctrine was of God. *Dott. 1.* Though the saving Graces of God's Spirit, are conveyed to the hearts of hearers, by the preaching of the Gospel; Yet God is the author and worker of them, and the Gospel only a mean by which He worketh: for, having spoken of their receiving the Spirit, when he first propounded this Argument, ver. 2. he doth here in the resuming of it, explain how they received it, to wit, by God's bestowing of it; *He therefore that ministrETH to you the Spirit.* 2. When the Doctrine of the Gospel, as it is now dispensed under the New Testament, did first break up, the Lord, to confirm the Truth thereof, did accompany the preaching of it with the working of miracles (which properly are works above natures strength, and so could be wrought by none but God) and this, that hereby the truth of the Doctrine might be confirmed, which being once sufficiently done, there is no further use for miracles now: for, the Apostle sheweth that miracles were wrought among the Galatians, by the hearing of Faith, and that this was one Argument of the divinity of that Doctrine, while he saith, *He that worketh miracles among you, doth He it by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?* 3. So strong and prevalent is the Spirit of Error, where it is letten loose, and so weak are the best in themselves to resist it; that for love to Error they will quit Truth, though formerly never so much confirmed and sealed unto them, by the saving fruits of God's Spirit in their hearts accompanying it: for, though these Galatians had the Doctrine of Justification plainly preached, ver. 1. and sealed to them by the saving Graces of God's Spirit, and by many miracles wrought among them; yet they make defection from it: *He therefore that ministrETH to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, &c.* Veril.

Verf. 6. *Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*

7. *Know ye therefore, that they which are of Faith, the same are the children of Abraham.*

HAVING put a close to that Argument, which he brought from their own experience, proving that we are justified by Faith and not by Works, he addeth another from a Scripture-example of *Abraham*, to confirm the same Truth, who, though he did abound in many vertues and good works, yet he was not justified by these, but by Faith only; which he proveth by the testimony of *Moses*, *Gen. 15. 6.* where it is affirmed, that *Abraham believed in the Lord*, to wit, not only by giving assent unto the Promise spoken of immediately before about the multiplication of his seed, and giving unto them the Land of *Canaan*, *Gen. 15. 5, 7.* but by assenting unto, and imbracing of the prime Promise of the Covenant made by God with him, that in the *Messias*, who was to come of him, he himself, and the Nations were to be blessed, *Gen. 12. 3.* of which Promise, this of the multiplication of his seed was but a dependent, and the means to effectuate it; which Faith of *Abraham's*, or the thing believed and laid hold upon by *Abraham's* Faith, to wit, the obedience of the Mediator the blessed Seed, was imputed unto him for righteousness, or accepted of God as his obedience for his Justification, ver. 6. from which he inferreth, or rather, the matter being so evident, he exciteith themselves to infer the conclusion, which he intendeth to prove. That only they who are of the Faith, or seek after Justification by Faith, are children of *Abraham*, by following of his steps, and succeeding to him in the inheritance of that blessing of free-gifted Righteousness, and Justification thereby, which he enjoyed; for, an equivalent phrase to this here, is that which is, ver. --9. *They are blessed with faithful Abraham*, ver. 7. *Doct. 1.* Though saving Faith hath

hath for its general object, the whole Word of God, consisting of Histories, Threatnings, Commands and Promises, both of temporal and eternal blessings; for, Faith giveth firm assent unto the whole Word, because of that divine Authority which revealeth it, *Act. 24. 14.* yet the principal object of justifying Faith, is the Word of Promise holding forth Christ and His Righteousnesse, as the meritorious cause of the Believers Salvation: for, this Promise which *Abraham* did believe, and the Faith whereof was imputed to him for righteousness, had Jesus Christ in its bosom, it being a Promise of giving unto *Abraham* a numerous seed, *Gen. 15. 4, 5.* and so a Promise of Jesus Christ to come of him, in whom all the Nations (*Act. 3. 25.*) and *Abraham* himself (ver. --9.) were to be blessed: *Even as Abraham believed God.* 2. That it may go well with a soul, and be accepted in God's sight, who can endure no unclean thing, *Hab. 1. 13--.* it is necessary that it be clothed with some righteousness of one sort or other: for, *Faith was accounted unto Abraham for righteousness.* 3. It being wholly impossible for fallen man, to attain unto that personal, perfect righteousness, which the Law requireth, *Rom. 3. 10. &c.* the Wisdom of God hath found out another way of making him righteous, to wit, that, whereby Faith is imputed, reckoned or accounted unto him for righteousness: for, *Abraham's Faith was accounted unto him,* to wit, by God, *for righteousness.* 4. Faith is not in a proper sense imputed to the Believer for righteousness, as if the work of Faith it self were imputed to us, and accepted of God, whether freely, or because of the merit of Christ, for our total and perfect righteousness, but it's imputed in a figurative sense, with respect had to that which Faith apprehendeth and layeth hold upon, to wit, the obedience and sufferings of Jesus Christ, these being laid hold on by Faith, become our righteousness, *Rom. 5. 19.* and *10. 4.* for, the Apostle, all alongst this Chapter, opposeth Faith and Works: now his Arguments would be of no force, if Faith did justify as a work, and for any worth

in it self; *It was accounted to him for righteousness*, 5. In the matter of Justification, Faith is opposed not only to those Works which go before Conversion, but to those also which follow after it, and are the real fruits of God's Spirit in the Believer: all Works, whether of the one sort or other, are excluded; for, even to *Abraham* many years after his Conversion, when he had abounded in good Works, and many gracious Vertues, (*Gen. 12, 13, 14, chapters*) *his Faith was accounted for righteousness*. 6. As there is a second and reiterated Justification of one and the same person in this sense, that upon our renewed apprehending of the Promise by Faith, the sentence of our absolution and adjudication to life eternal, is also renewed; so this second Justification is not upon the account, or for the merit of our good Works, no more than the former. It is alwayes Faith that justifieth: for, *Abraham* who was justified long before, upon a renewed act of his believing, hath his Faith of new, and not his Works, *imputed to him for righteousness*. 7. The Godly under the Old Testament, and the Godly under the New, are justified one and the same way: as we are justified freely, *Rom. 3. 24.* so were they, *Isa. 43. 25.* as we are justified fully, and absolved both from the guilt and punishment of sin, *1 Job. 1. -7. Rom. 8. 1.* so were they, *Isa. 53. 5.* otherwise the Apostle could not argue from *Abraham's* Justification to ours, as he doth here; *Know ye therefore* (saith he) *that they which are of the Faith, &c.* 8. They who are of the Faith, or who seek after Justification by Faith, are *Abraham's* children and his seed; they who are Members of the visible Church, and profess the Doctrine of Faith, are his children outwardly, because they walk in the steps of their father *Abraham*, by professing of, and assenting to that Doctrine of Faith, which he believed, *Rom. 4. 12.* whereby they have title to the Covenant of Grace, *Act. 2. 39. Rom. 11. 16, 17.* which title of theirs to the Covenant, implyeth a right to enjoy all divine Ordinances, (*Act. 2. 38, 39.*) whereof they are capable, and from which they do not debar themselves by

by ignorance, (1 Cor. 11. 28.) or scandal, Mat. 18. 17. It implyeth also all external Church-priviledges leading unto Salvation, Rom. 9. 4. Yea, and a right to Salvation it self, upon God's terms, required in the Gospel, Joh. 3. 16. In which respect, Salvation is said to be of the Jews, Joh. 4. 22. They again, who do not only profess the Doctrine of Faith, but also imbrace it in their hearts, by the grace of saving Faith, are *Abraham's* children inwardly; because, they have not only a title to the Covenant of Grace, but also come up to the conditions required in it; and so do walk in the steps of saving Faith and Repentance, wherein *Abraham* walked, who is held forth as a pattern and father for imitation unto others, whereby they enjoy not only outward priviledges, but also saving benefits and blessings, and have not only a conditional, but an absolute and actual right unto Heaven and Glory, the covenanted Inheritance of *Abraham's* children, Heb. 11. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16-. This distinction of *Abraham's* children outwardly and inwardly, is founded upon, Rom. 2. 28, 29. and is necessary, as for the right understanding of other places of Scripture, so of this, *They which be of the Faith, are the Children of Abraham.*

Verf. 8. *And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through Faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all Nations be blessed.*

9. *So then they which be of Faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.*

BECAUSE the former consequence from *Abraham's* Justification to ours, might be questioned to hold in the Gentiles, who were not of *Abraham's* posterity, therefore the Apostle doth clear it from the words of the Promise made to *Abraham*, Gen. 12. 3. that in him, or, in his seed, Jesus Christ who was to come of him (Gen. 22. 18.) all the Nations, or Gentiles, were to be blessed; which

Promise, he sheweth, was no other than the Gospel or glad tydings, that all the blessings to be purchased by Christ *Abraham's* seed, (among which Justification by Faith was one) were to be bestowed by God upon the Gentiles, and that the Scripture, or Spirit which speaks in Scripture, fore-knowing, to wit, in the Decree, that God was to do so, did contrive the Promise in these words, of purpose that it might bear so much, ver. 8. from which he inferreth, that all Believers indefinitely, the Nations not excluded, but included, do partake of all those saving blessings which *Abraham* did partake of, by Faith, among which, free Justification was the chief; for of that is the question, ver. 9. *Doct. 1.* That Scripture is not an invention of man, but the Word of the all-knowing God, appeareth from this, that several things are foretold therein, which had their accomplishment a long time afterwards, according as they were foretold, the knowledge of which things at so great a distance of time, could not be in any but God, *Isa. 41. 22, 23.* for, the calling of the Gentiles, and their Justification by Faith, was foretold about the space of two thousand years before it fell out; *And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through faith.* 2. The foreknowledge of future events, at the greatest distance, doth most properly and peculiarly belong unto God; which doth alwayes suppose His Will and Decree, that such things shall come to passe; in which Decree of His, He doth foreknow them, *Act. 2. 23.* Whatever foresight of this kind is in any of the creatures, they have it by borrowed light from Him, and (as we say) by lighting their Candles at His Torch: for, the foreknowing that the Gentiles would be justified by Faith, is attributed to Scripture, or the Spirit of God speaking in Scripture; *And the Scripture foreseeing, &c.* 3. The calling of the Gentiles, and their attaining to Salvation by free-grace, and all the spiritual priviledges of *Abraham's* seed, was a thing hardly credible at the first breaking-forth of the Gospel, the case of all Nations, except the Jews, seemed

seemed to be so desperate and damnable, *Eph. 2. 11, 12.* Hence the Apostle seeth it necessary upon all occasions almost, to clear, that the calling of the Gentiles had ground from Scripture, as here, *The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen by Faith.* 4. Hence we learn several things, tending to the right understanding of that Promise made to *Abraham, Gen. 12. 3. In thee, or in thy seed (Gen. 22. 18.)* to wit, Christ, *all Nations shall be blessed*; As, first, That the Covenant of Grace made with *Abraham*, whereof this Promise is one Article, was extended not only to *Abraham's* carnal seed, but to all Believers in every place, even among the Gentiles: for, *in thee all Nations shall be blessed.* Secondly, All men by nature, and considered without respect had to, and as not having interest in this gracious Covenant made with *Abraham* in Christ, are destitute of all blessings, under the drop of God's wrath and curse, *Eph. 2. --3.* and so are really cursed: for, this is imported, while he saith, *in thee*, and not otherwise, *all Nations shall be blessed.* Thirdly, That we who by nature are cursed creatures, should be freed from the curse, and do partake of the contrary blessing, it cometh to passe by vertue of that gracious Covenant made with *Abraham*: and more particularly, it is through Jesus Christ *Abraham's* seed, in whom we, being ingrafted by faith, are delivered from the curse, *ver. 13.* for, *In thee, or in thy seed (Gen. 22. 18.) all Nations shall be blessed.* Fourthly, The Blessings promised to *Abraham's* seed, in the Covenant made by God with him, were not only temporal, carnal, and appertaining to this life, but heavenly and spiritual. The former indeed were often inculcated upon the Ancient Church, *Deut. 28. 2, 3, &c.* not, as if these had been all, or the main Blessings of the Covenant, but as they were shadows only of things more heavenly, *Heb. 11. 14, 15, 16.* for, the Apostle explaineth one part at least of the Blessings promised, to be Justification by Faith; *The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen by Faith, saith, In thee shall Nations be blessed.* Fifthly, The man

who is justified by Faith, is a blessed man ; and there is no blessednesse under the Sun comparable unto this, for a man to have his sin pardoned, *Psal. 32. 1.* and the Righteousnesse of Christ imputed unto him, and so to be placed in a state of favour with God : for, the Apostle expoundeth the Blessing promised, by *being justified : The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen by Faith.* Sixthly, This Promise made to *Abraham*, containeth in it the summe of the Gospel, to wit, the glad tydings of all spiritual blessings, and particularly of a free-gifted Righteousnesse, purchased by Christ, to be bestowed upon all who by Faith should be ingrafted in Christ, and that the Gentiles should have accessse in the dayes of the Gospel, to these Blessings among the rest : for, the Promise holdeth out all this ; and *Paul* calleth the revealing of this Promise, the preaching of the Gospel ; *The Scripture preached before the Gospel unto Abraham.* Seventhly, The Gospel therefore is no new Doctrine, but the same in substance with that which was taught to *Abraham*, and to the Church under the Old Testament : for, saith he, *The Scripture preached before the Gospel unto Abraham.* Eighthly, Though the Gospel, or glad tydings of Salvation, was not unknown to the Ancient Church ; yet it was but a very small glimmering light which they had of it, in comparison with what we do now enjoy : all that Scripture recordeth *Adam* and the Patriarchs to have had of it, was in that obscure Promise, *Gen. 3. 15.* and all that *Abraham* had of it, was in this Promise here mentioned, which, though it was much clearer than the former, because the day-light of the Gospel under the New Testament, was then drawing nearer ; yet it was far short in clearnesse and plainnesse of these Gospel-promises which we do now enjoy, as *Joh. 3. 16. Scripture preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all Nations be blessed.* Ninthly, The blessing of Justification by Faith, and of other spiritual favours promised to the Nations in *Abraham*, was such, as *Abraham* was not the author of it, but a sharer

a sharer in it with the rest of those to whom it was promised: so he infeteth from the Blessing promised to *Abraham*, That we are blessed with faithfull *Abraham*. Doct. 5. Eminent Priviledges bestowed by God upon particular persons, do not exempt them from walking to Heaven in the common path-way with others, if so they look for it at all: for, *Abraham*, though highly priviledged to be the father of Believers, ver. 7. in whom all Nations were to be blessed, *Gen.* 12. 3. yet behoved to enjoy the Blessing, not because of his own merit, but freely and by Faith as well as others, as is imported in the Epithet of Faithful, given to *Abraham*; *We are blessed with faithfull Abraham*; not with circumcised vertuous *Abraham*. 6. God, in bestowing of Blessings promised upon condition of Faith, doth not so much look upon the greatnesse of Faith, as the truth and sincerity of it: for, though every one who are of Faith, believe not so strongly as *Abraham* did; yet they are blessed with faithfull *Abraham*.

Verf. 10. For as many as are of the works of the Law, are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them.

HERE is a third Argument, to prove that we are justified by Faith, and not by Works; because they who seek to be justified by the works of the Law, are under the curse of God, and so not justified; which he proveth, because according to Scripture (*Deut.* 27. 26.) the Law pronounceth the curse upon every man, who fulfilleth not the whole Law in every tittle or jot of it: now he taketh it for granted that none fulfill the whole Law, and so doth leave unto them to gather that the Law doth fasten the curse upon all who seek Justification by it. Doct. 1. That *Paul* doth mean the Works not only of the Ceremonial Law, but also of the Moral, all alongs this dispute, while he excludeth Works from being the

cause of Justification, appeareth from the Scripture here cited, which is verified mainly in the Moral Law, as it appeareth from these sins in particular, against which the Levites were to denounce the curse, all of them being transgressions of the Moral Law, *Deut. 27. 15, 16, &c.* to the end : *For it is written, Cursed is every one.* 2. Fallen man, is so far from attaining to a state of favour with God and happinesse here or hereafter, by any Works which he can do ; that when he hath done the utmost, even of what his natural strength or renewed faculties of grace can reach, if he seek to be justified by it, he remaineth under God's curse and wrath, notwithstanding of all : for, the Apostle affirmeth universally of all, *that are of the works of the Law*, that is, who seek to be justified by works done in obedience to the Law, (for therein was the great controversie) *that they are under the curse.* 3. The cursed estate of man by nature through sin and misery, together with that impossibility he lyeth under, to be recovered from that wofull estate, and to regain a state of favour with God by any work of righteousness which he doth, is a thing known, not by the discoursing of natural reason, which, being blind in the things of God, cannot judge aright neither of its own misery, nor of the way of recovery from it, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* The knowledge of those is borrowed from Scripture-light, whose sentence alone is to be stood to in this matter : hence *Paul* appealeth to Scripture for probation of what he hath herein affirmed ; *For it is written*, saith he, *Cursed is every one.* 4. Every sin, even the least, as being a wrong done against God, (*Jam. 2. 11.*) who is infinit in all His Attributes (*Job 11. 7, 8, 9.*) and a transgression of His holy and righteous Law (*1 Job. 3. 4. Rom. 7. 12.*) deserveth no lesse than that the curse of God should light upon the sinner ; under which curse is comprehended all the miseries of this life (*Lam. 3. 39.*) death it self, (*Rom. 6. 23.*) and the pains of Hell for ever, *Mat. 25. 41. 46.* for, so the Scripture cited affirmeth, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things*, that is, who

who transgresseth in one thing. 5. There is no person whether rich or poor, noble or ignoble, learned or unlearned, whose sin deserveth not the forementioned curse: The consideration indeed of the person of some sinners, doth aggregate their sin beyond the sin of others, *Rom. 2. 17. to 25.* but no consideration of the person of any can so far extenuate his sin, as to make it not deserving of God's wrath and curse: for, saith he, *Cursed is every one, without exception, who continueth not.* 6. Not only sins of commission, or doing of that which the Law forbiddeth, but also sins of omission, or the leaving undone of what the Law commandeth, do deserve the curse: for, saith he, *Cursed is every one*, not only who doth what the Law forbiddeth, *but who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the Law to do them.* 7. It is not the bare knowledge of our duty, nor yet a fair profession of love and respect to our duty so known, which cometh up to that exact righteousness, that the Law requireth under hazard of the curse; there must be practice also according to that knowledge: for, *Cursed is every one who continueth not to do them.* 8. This real obedience and practice that the Law of God requireth under hazard of the curse, is universal, extending it self to the conscience-making of all duties commanded, together with the way wherein they are commanded, *Mat. 15. 8.* and to the abstaining from all sins forbidden, together with their occasions, *Job 31. 1.* for, *Cursed is every one who continueth not in All things*, he saith not, in some things only. 9. This obedience required, is also constant, from the first minute of a man's life, to the hour of his death; so that though he should but once sin, he is under the curse; for, *Cursed is every one who continueth not to do them.* 10. It is altogether impossible for any one of fallen mankind, either of himself (*Job. 15. -5.*) or, by any grace received in this life (*1 Job. 1. 8.*) to keep the Law perfectly, or to attain to that exact measure of righteousness, that the Law requireth; which appeareth, not only from what the Law requireth, as it hath

hath been formerly cleared, but also from this; *Paul* takes it here for a confessed and granted conclusion: for, if any could keep the Law, then every man who seeketh to be justified by the works of the Law, should not be cursed, providing they did what they could, as *Paul* here affirmeth, seing the Law doth curse none but those who do not keep the Law; *For as many as are of the works of the Law, are under the curse: for it is written, &c.*

11. Though every man doth break the Law, and so deserveth that curse, which is pronounced against sin by the Law; Yet all are not left to perish under this curse, some are delivered from it, to wit, those that are of Faith, or, who by Faith lay hold on *Jesus Christ* for righteousness, who was made a curse for them, ver. 13. such having fled from the sentence and curse of the Law, and laid hold on the Covenant of Grace revealed in the Gospel shall be judged not by the Law, but the Gospel, which admitteth of the Righteousnesse of a Cautioner imputed (*Philip. 3. 9.*) instead of an exact personall righteousness, required by the Law: for, saith the Apostle, *As many as are of the works of the Law, are under the curse, and so, not they who are of Faith.* 12. Those who do not betake themselves to the Covenant of Grace, must stand and fall according to the sentence of the Law, or Covenant of Works; and therefore seing the Law doth curse them (as not having come up to the exact righteousness required in it) cursed are they, and cursed shall they be: for, saith he, *They who are of the Law, or, seek Justification by the Law, are cursed; because the Law seeketh more than they can perform.*

Verf. 11. *But that no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The Just shall live by Faith.*

12. *And the Law is not of Faith: but, the man that doth them shall live in them.*

IN these Verses is the fourth Argument, to prove the negative part of the main Conclusion, to wit, That no man is justified in God's sight (who judgeth not according

according to outward appearance, but according to Truth, 1 Sam. 16. -7.) by his personal obedience to the Law; and that because righteousness and life cometh from Faith, as he proveth from *Habbak.* 2. -4. and therefore not from the Law, ver. 11. The force of which consequence, as the Apostle declareth, doth ly in this, that *the Law is not of Faith*, that is, the way of Justification, which the Law prescribeth, (to wit, the *Law*, as strictly taken for the meer precepts, legal promises, and threatenings of the Law, See chap. 2. ver. 15.) doth not consist with the way of Justification by Faith; because the Law promiseth life to him only who observeth what the Law prescribeth, and so hath a perfect inherent righteousness, as he proveth from *Lev.* 18. 5. but Faith conveyeth life to him who is destitute of that righteousness, if he believe on Him that justifieth the ungodly by Faith, as he hath cleared frequently before (See *Rom.* 4. 5.) and so doth not expresse it now, ver. 12. *Dock 1.* There is a twofould Justification of a sinner, one which is in the sight of God, and is here expressed, whereby he is reputed and standeth righteous and just in the estimation of God the Judge, whose judgment is unerring, and alwayes according to Truth, *Jer.* 11. 10. Another, which is before men, and is here implied, whereby the sinner is reputed and standeth righteous in the estimation of men, whose judgment, as flowing from charity (1 Cor. 13. 7.) and grounded upon outward appearance (2 Sam. 16. -7.) may frequently erre and be deceived; *But that no man is justified in the sight of God.* 2. Though God do not justify any, or esteeme of him as righteous for any works done in obedience to the Law; Yet that a man may be justified in man's sight because of his works, is not here denied by the Apostle: for Justification before men is nothing else, but a charitable judgment past upon the person, that God hath justified him by Faith; which judgment is grounded upon the evidences of the person's faith, manifested in the fruits of good works, *Jam.* 2. -18. *But that no man is justified by the Law in*

Gods

Gods sight, &c. 3. The spirit of Error being once given way to, doth so far blind the understanding (*1sa. 44. 20.*) that it cannot see, and so far engage the will and affections to the maintaining of it (*2 Tim. 4. 3.*) that the person erring will not see what Scripture saith against that Error, though it be never so evident to an indifferent eye: for, though the maintainers of Justification by Works, would not, or could not see it; yet the Scriptures, even of the Old Testament, did give clear testimony against that Error, and for the contrary Truth; *It is evident,* (saith Paul) *for, the Just shall live.* 4. The Doctrine of Justification by Faith, and not by Works, is no new-fangled opinion, the Scriptures, even of the Old Testament, give testimony to it, as the only way of Justification before God, which then was: for, Paul proveth, that none are justified by the Law, from an Old Testament-Scripture, cited out of *Hab. 2. -4. The Just shall live by Faith.* 5. The Scripture cited, teacheth, first, That the way of justifying a sinner, or of making him righteous under the Old Testament, and under the New, is the same; and therefore we may safely draw arguments from the one to the other: for, so doth the Apostle here, *It is evident: for, The Just shall live by faith.* Secondly, Faith in God, and His Promises, especially these wherein Jesus Christ and His Righteousnesse are offered, is that which maketh a sinner just and righteous in God's sight; for, the words may be rendred thus, *The Just by Faith shall live*; so that they shew what that is, which makes a man just and righteous. Thirdly, The man who is thus just by Faith, is recovered from that state of death, wherein every man by nature lyeth, *Eph. 2. 1.*) and doth live; which life of his, doth also flow from faith: for, both righteousness and life are here ascribed to faith; *The Just shall live by Faith.* Fourthly, This life by Faith, which the Believer doth enjoy, is such, as furnisheth him with comfortable through-bearing in the midst of hardest dispensations, without apostasie and fainting, in so far as he doth not walk by

by present sense, but taketh up God as reconciled to him in Christ, 2 Cor. 4. 18. and looketh upon his present crosse, as an evidence of God's fatherly love, Heb. 12. 6. and knoweth it will have a blessed event to him in God's way and time, Rom. 8. 28. and that his life is hid with God in Christ, Col. 3. 3. far above the reach of any trouble; for, this is the Prophet's scope, from whom this place is cited, even to shew that the Just shall so live by Faith, as to ride out the storm arising from the present trouble, which was to overwhelm others. (See Hab. 2. 4.) *The Just shall live by Faith.* Fifthly, This life of the Believer which he enjoyeth by Faith, though it be begun here in the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, Job. 17. 3. and in freedom from the deserved sentence of death, Rom. 8. 1. whereupon followeth a right to eternal life, Job. 3. 3. and in the lively practice of all commanded duties, to which the Believer is enabled by drawing life and vertue out of Christ through Faith, Philip. 4. 13. Yet, this life is not circumscribed with the present time, it's to be perfected afterward in Glory, so that the life flowing from Faith, is a lasting, never-ending, ever-continuing and eternal life: for, the Promise is extended unto all imaginable future duration, without any restriction: *The Just shall live by Faith.*

From Vers. 12. *Learn, 1.* Though the Law and Faith, or the Gospel which is the Doctrine of Faith, be not contrary each to other (both of them being the Truths of God) but are mutually subservient one to another in many things, the Law making sin known, Rom. 3. - 20. the Gospel holding forth the remedy of sin, Job. 1. 29. the Law pointing forth our need of Christ, Rom. 10. 4. and the Gospel giving us an offer of Christ for life and righteousness, 1 Cor. 1. 30. The Law again holding forth those duties wherein the man, made righteous by Faith, ought to walk, and to testifie his thankfulness, Eph. 5. 1, 2. and the Gospel, or Faith in Jesus Christ offered in the Gospel, furnishing him with spirituall strength to walk in these duties, which the Law prescribeth,

scribeth, 2 Cor. 3. -6. Yet, the Law and Faith are mutually inconsistent in the point of Justification ; so that if Justification be sought by the works of the Law, it cannot be had by Faith ; and if it be had by Faith, it cannot be attained by the works of the Law ; there can be no mixture of Law and Gospel, Faith and Works in this matter : for, in this sense the Apostle affirmeth, *The Law is not of Faith.* 2. The Law doth offer life to none upon easier terms than perfect obedience, and the constant and universal practice of whatsoever the Law prescribeth ; for, the voice of the Law is, *The man that doth them*, to wit those things that the Law enjoyneth, *shall live in them*, or attain eternal life by his so doing. 3. The way of Justification by Faith, doth wholly exclude our doing and works, and those of every sort, from having influence as causes or conditions, either in part or in whole, upon our Justification before God : for, the Apostle proveth the inconsistency of the *Law* and *Faith* in the point of Justification from this, that the Law suspendeth our right to life upon the condition of doing and works ; and therefore the way of Justification by Faith, must wholly exclude Works, else the Apostle should not cogently have proved the thing intended, to wit, That the Law is inconsistent with Faith, from this, *That he who doth them shall live in them.*

Verf. 13. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us : for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree :*

14. *That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ : that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through Faith.*

HE addeth a fifth Argument to prove the affirmative part of the main Conclusion, to wit, That we are justified by Faith ; and withall sheweth how Faith doth justify ; not for any merit or worth in it self, but as it receiveth Jesus Christ, whereby all the blessings purchased

sed by Him, are applied to Believers : for, the Apostle, obviating an objection, which he foresaw might arise from ver. 10. (to wit, If the Law do curse all men, how then are any freed from the curse ?) sheweth, that Jesus Christ hath delivered us from God's wrath, or the sentence of the Law's curse, by taking upon Himself the curse due to us, while He was obedient to death, even the death of the crosse, *Philip. 2. 8.* Which kind of death was pronounced to be accursed, as he proveth from *Deut. 21. - 23.* This is contained ver. 13. And hence he shewes a double fruit did flow : the first, to the Gentiles, the blessing of Church-priviledges, divine Ordinances, and of Reconciliation, Adoption, Grace here, and Glory hereafter, promised to the Nations in *Abraham, Gen. 22. 18.* being now purchased by Christ, and residing in Him as the Head and Fountain, did come through Him to the unrighteous Gentiles, who before the time of Christ's death were strangers to Christ, and to *Abraham's* blessing purchased by Christ, *Eph. 2. 12.* The second fruit of Christ's death, did accresse to the Jews (among whom he reckoneth himself) joynly with the Gentiles, who being by Christ's death joyned in one, did enjoy the Promise of the Spirit, or the spiritual Promise, as being now denuded of these earthly and external Ceremonies, wherewith it was veiled formerly, and set forth in its native and spiritual beauty and lustre : both which fruits of Christ's death he sheweth are conveyed unto, and enjoyed by both Jews and Gentiles only by Faith : So that the Apostle in these two Verses, doth not only prove the main Conclusion, That Faith, laying hold on Christ, is that which delivereth from the Law's curse, and which conveyeth *Abraham's* blessing, together with the Covenant-promise, unto us, and so doth justify us ; but also indirectly, and (as it were) at the by, hinteth at two other Truths, tending also to clear the main controversie between him and his adversaries, which therefore he is to assert more directly afterwards, to wit, first, That now after Christ's death, the Gentiles being called by the Gospel,

Gospel, were to be joyned in one body with the Jews, and both of them to make up one seed to *Abraham*, and equally to partake of *Abraham's* blessing, whereof free Justification through Faith, spoken of, ver. 9. was a main part. And, secondly, that the Covenant-promise (that God would be a God to *Abraham* and to his seed, *Gen.* 17. 7.) was now after Christ's death to be held forth more clearly and spiritually, the types and shadows of earthly Ceremonies, and of that legal Dispensation, under which it was formerly hid, being laid aside.

From Verf. 13. *Learn*, 1. The threatnings of the Law, denouncing a curse against those who yeeld not personal obedience to it, did not exclude or forbid a Surety to come in the sinners room, and to undergo the curse due unto Him: for, though it be clear from ver. 10. that the Law doth curse all; yet this impeded not, but Christ might come to *redeem us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us*. 2. Every man by nature, the Elect not excepted, *Eph.* 2. - 3. are under the sentence of the Law's curse, whereby in God's justice they are under the power of darknesse, (*Col.* 1. 13.) slavery and bondage to sin and Satan, (*Eph.* 2. - 2.) so to remain until they be cast in utter darknesse, *Jude*, 13. except delivery and redemption do interveen: for, while it is said, *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law*, it is supposed that by nature we are under it. 3. There is no delivery of enslaved man from this wofull bondage, but by giving satisfaction, and by paying of a price for the wrong done to Divine Justice, either by himself, or by some surety in his stead; God's fidelity (*Gen.* 2. 17.) His righteous nature (*Psal.* 11. 6, 7.) and the inward desert of sin (*Rom.* 1. 32.) do call for it; for, *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law*: the word signifieth to deliver by giving a price. 4. It is not in the power of fallen man to acquire a ransom for himself by any thing he can either do or suffer, whereby Justice may be satisfied, and he delivered from this state of slavery and bondage,

dage. The redemption of the soul is precious, and ceaseth for ever (to wit) among men, *Psal.* 49. 8. for, if man could redeem himself, Christ had not been put to it to *redeem us from the curse of the Law*. 5. Jesus Christ the second Person of the blessed Trinity, hath undertaken this great work of redeeming captive-man from his slavery and bondage, and accordingly hath accomplished it. The work was indeed undertaken at the appointment of all the Persons, *Luke* 1. 68. to whom also the price was paid, *Eph.* 5. 2. only the execution of this work, was by that wise design of sending the second Person in the flesh to become man; that so he might not only have right as our near kinsman, *Ruth* 3. 12, 13. but also be fitted to redeem, as having a price to lay down for our ransom, *Heb.* 10. 5. *Christ hath redeemed us*. 6. Our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, is true God, who being man's Creator, and having entred a Covenant of friendship with man at the beginning, by vertue whereof He had interest in man, not only as His creature, but as one in state of friendship with Himself; from which blessed state man did fall, *Eccles.* 7. 29. and so brought himself and all his posterity (*1 Cor.* 15. 21--) to this state of bondage wherein he now is: for, so much is imported, while Christ is said to *redeem*; Redemption being properly of those things which once were our own, but for the time are lost; *Christ hath redeemed us*, saith he. 7. This work of man's Redemption, undertaken and accomplished by Christ, was a Redemption properly so called; our freedom and delivery being obtained, not by power or strong hand meerly, nor yet coming from the sole condescension and pity of the injured party, without seeking reparation for former injuries, but by the payment of a sufficient price, and by giving a just satisfaction to a provoked God; as appeareth not only from the word rendred *redeem*; which, as said is, signifieth *to buy with a price*, but also from this, that the price is condescended upon, to wit, Christ's undergoing the curse of the Law due to us; and this He did *for us*, that

is, not only for our good, but also in our room and stead: for, by His undergoing this curse, we are freed from it, so that although to *buy* or *redeem*, be sometimes taken improperly, and doth signifie to obtain a thing without any price, *Isa.* 52. 3. yet what is presently said, and other circumstances do evince, that in this work of Redemption performed by Christ, the word must be taken properly for a delivery obtained by a payment of a just price; *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us.* 8. The price paid by Christ, in order to our redemption, was no lesse than His undergoing that curse of the Law, which was due to us: whence it followeth that Christ's sufferings, by way of satisfaction, were not only in His body, but also in His soul: He did not only wrestle with the fear of death, *Heb.* 5. -7. but was also deprived of that joy and comfort, or the sense and feeling of God's favour and help, which He formerly enjoyed; and had His own sad conflicts and agonies arising in His Soul hereupon, *Mat.* 27. 46. which, though in us they would necessarily produce sin, yet in Christ they did not, *Heb.* 4. -15. because of His most pure nature, *Heb.* 7. 26. for, *He was made the curse of the Law for us.* Now the curse of the Law did reach to the terrors of the soul, as well as to the pains of the body. 9. Though Jesus Christ, as considered in His own Person, was altogether holy and innocent, *Isa.* 53. -9. and alwayes, even when He was made a curse, most beloved of the Father, *Mat.* 3. 17. yet being considered as our Surety (*Heb.* 7. 22.) and sustaining our person, He was the object of sin-pursuing justice, and no more spared than if we our selves who sinned, had been in His place: for, the Text saith, He was not only accursed, *but made a curse*, in the abstract, to shew how greatly he was accursed in death; neither was this execration only in respect of man, who indeed did judge Him execrable, *Isa.* 53. 3, 4. but also in respect of God, as appeareth by the testimony alleaged out of *Deut.* 21. 23. for, though the Apostle, intending the sense only, and not

not the words, omitteth the mentioning of God; Yet in the place cited we have it thus, *He that is hanged, is accursed of God.* 10. The malefactor among the Jews, who was adjudged to end his life by hanging on a tree, was pronounced by God to be a curse, or accursed; not as if every one who died that death, even notwithstanding of their repentance, had been rejected of God, and condemned, *Luke 23. 39, 43.* but partly, because that was a most odious and infamous death in it self, as being afflicted only for atrocious and heinous crimes; and partly, because it was fore-ordained of God, that Christ our Surety should end His life by that kind of death, in order to our redemption and delivery from the Law's deserved curse; for which cause mainly, God was pleased to pronounce that kind of death accursed above any other; as appeareth from the Apostle's alleaging this Scripture, to clear that Christ was made a curse for us; *It is written,* saith he, *Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*

From Vers. 14. *Learn, 1.* So wonderfull is God in working, especially in that great work of our Redemption, that He bringeth about one contrary by another; He giveth life by death, and the blessing by the curse; and frequently in His way of working, our choicest mercies do come through greatest miseries: for, *Christ was made a curse, that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles.* 2. The blessing promised to Abraham, and to the Nations in Abraham, or rather in Christ Abraham's seed, (*Gen. 22. 18.*) was not of temporal things only, as of Corn and Wine, of a fat and rich soile: these were only the shell, but the kernell of that Promise were blessings of another sort, even spiritual, such as Grace here, and Glory hereafter; which appeareth from this, that before this blessing could be conveyed to Abrahams believing seed, a price of infinite value behoved to be paid for it, a price too precious to purchase any temporal blessing by; for, *even Christ was made a curse, that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles.* 3. The spiritual blessing of Grace here

and Glory hereafter, promised to; and in *Abraham*, as it was purchased by Christ at a dear rate, so it resideth and is exstant in Him, who is as it were the storehouse, wherein the blessing is laid up (*Col. 2. 3.*) and the dispenser of it unto *Abraham's* seed (*Act. 5. 31.*) in whom Believers are truly blessed (*Gen. 22. 18.*) and from whose fulnesse we do all receive, and Grace for Grace, *Joh. 1. 16.* for, saith the Text, *That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ*; or, as it is in the Original, in *Jesus Christ*: So that this blessing is still in Him, as the fountain and dispenser of it. 4. Though *Jesus Christ* was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, *Rev. 13. - 8.* in so far as remission of sins and life eternal, were bestowed upon Believers under the Old Testament, through the merit of His death, even before He actually died, *Rom. 3. 25.* it being sufficient, in order to these effects, that it was transacted between the Father and the Son, that He should die; *Isa. 53. 10.* and that it was certainly known by God that He would die, *Act. 15. 18.* Yet, there were some effects of His death, and those of great advantage to the Church, both of Jews and Gentiles, which were kepted in store, and in Gods wise dispensation not to be actually bestowed, untill the time of His death; As, first, in relation to the Gentiles, the real making-over of *Abraham's* blessing unto them, whereby they were made one actual seed unto *Abraham* with the believing Jews, was to follow upon Christ's death, God having so provided, and not to go before it: for, *Christ* was first made a curse, by being hanged on a tree, before the blessing of *Abraham* did come upon the Gentiles. Secondly, in relation to both Jew and Gentile, the Covenant-promise made to *Abraham* and his seed (*Gen. 17. 7.*) which before Christ's death was veiled over with many carnal Ceremonies, and lay hid under the many reiterated Promises of temporal blessings and an earthly *Canaan*, *Gen. 15. 7. &c.* was after Christ's death to be made more clear, the vail of Ceremonies and earthly blessings to be removed, and the promised blessings of Righteousness

ness and life everlasting to be held forth in their spiritual beauty and lustre: for, upon Christ's being made a curse, he saith, *We*, to wit, not only the Gentiles, but the Jews also, of whom Paul was one, *do receive the promise of the Spirit*, that is, after the manner of speaking used by the Hebrews, *the spiritual promise*, in opposition to those external rites and shadows under which it did formerly lurk. Doct. 5. Though by the grace of saving Faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatever he knoweth to be revealed in the Word, *Act. 24. -14.* and is in some measure (especially when Faith is lively) affected, and doth practise according to what each Truth calleth for, yeelding obedience to the Commands, *Rom. 16. --26.* trembling at threatnings, *Isa. 66. -2.* and imbracing the Promises of God for this life (*Psal. 23. 1.*) and that which is to come, *Heb. 11. 13.* Yet, the principal acts of Faith, as it is saving and justifying, are the accepting and receiving of the Promise, and of Christ's satisfaction to the Father's justice, held forth in the Promise: for, Paul, speaking of Faiths part in Justification, setteth forth the exercise of it thus. *That we might receive the promise by Faith.* 6. Faith doth justifie and make us blessed, not for any worth in it self, as if the work and merit of Faith were reckoned to us for righteousness, but because it is the instrument, and, as it were, the hand of the soul, whereby we receive the Promise, and Christ in the Promise, whose satisfaction alone is our only righteousness before God, *Rom. 5. -19.* for, that Paul is to be understood thus all alongs this dispute, appeareth from these two Verses, wherein he ascribeth our delivery from the curse, and partaking of Abraham's blessing, to Christ's merit, or to His being made a curse for us, giving unto Faith only the receeiving and imbracing of that satisfaction, as it is offered in the Promise; *That we might receive the Promise through Faith*, saith he.

Ver. 15. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: though it be but a mans Covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

16. Now to Abraham and his seed were the Promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

17. And this I say, that the Covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the Law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the Promise of none effect.

18. For if the inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promise: but God gave it to Abraham by Promise.

THE Apostle, having confirmed the truth of his Doctrine by several Arguments, doth in the second part of the Chapter, answer some Objections, and joyntly herewith refuteth the other Error, maintained by his adversaries, about the necessity of observing the Ceremonial Law; shewing, that however the Law, or the legal way of dispensing the Covenant of Grace prescribed unto Moses upon mount Sinai, was for good use, so long as by God's appointment it was to stand in force; yet, Christ being now come in the flesh, the date, prefixed for its continuance, was now expired, and so the Christian Church of Jews and Gentiles wholly freed from the observation of it.

The first Objection, as may be gathered by his Answer, was to this purpose, That granting what the Apostle had said concerning Justification by Faith in the Promise, and not by Works, did hold true, before the Law was given by Moses; yet afterwards that way of Justification seemeth to have been altered, and Justification by Works established according to the tenour of the Law given by God on mount Sinai, seeing that latter Acts and constitutions do not only stand in force, but also abrogate the former, in so far, at least, as they are inconsistent with the latter.

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The Apostle answereth by a comparison, which he sheweth is taken from humane affairs ; and, first, setteth down the similitude to this purpose, That a Covenant or Paction made among men for preserving mutual peace and friendship, being once confirmed by Oath, and other usual solemnities, cannot without imputation of levity or injustice be disannulled and quite broken, neither can any condition destructive to the former, be added to it, ver. 15. And, secondly, That he may apply this similitude with greater evidence and force, he first sheweth, the nature of that Covenant, made by God with *Abraham*, did consist in Promises, wherein the blessing promised is given freely, and not for the merit and worth of our obedience and works (as the word rendred *Promise* doth signifie) and next he sheweth, that all *Abraham's* seed, not only those who lived before the giving of the Law, but those also who lived after ; and not only the Jews, but also the Gentiles were comprehended in the Covenant, and to partake of the promised Blessing, according to the tenour of it ; which he proveth from the formal words of the Covenant-tender, which express all those who were to partake of the covenanted Blessing, by the name of *Abraham* and of his *Seed*, in the singular number, to shew, that it is under one and the same consideration, that they all are his seed, and do partake of his promised Blessing ; otherwise, if it had been Gods purpose to convey the heavenly Inheritance unto some upon their Faith in the Promise, and unto others for the merit of their Works, Then the Promise should have been made unto his *Seeds* in the plural number, as pointing at the different grounds of this their spiritual relation unto *Abraham*, and not unto his *Seed* in the singular ; which seed of *Abraham*, is here called *Christ*, to wit, *Christ* mystical, which comprehendeth *Christ* the Head, and all Believers, whether before the Law or after, whether Jew or Gentile, as the Members of that Body whereof *Christ* is the Head : all of which are designed by the name of *Christ*, as *1 Cor. 12. - 12. Col. 1. 24.* and

So here, to shew, that not *Moses*, not the Law, not Works, but Christ, the Promise, and faith in Christ, and the Promise is the bond and ty of this Union pleaded-for in *Abrahams* seed, ver. 16. Thirdly, He applyeth the similitude taken from the unchangeablenesse of humane Covenants, and inferreth, that much lesse can that Covenant which was made with *Abraham* and his seed be abrogated, or any condition destructive be added to it by the Law, which was given four hundred and thirty years after: which consequence, is inforced by four Considerations, 1. It was a Covenant made with *Abraham*, not by a man like himself, but by God. 2. It was not only made, but long before ratified and confirmed, both by the Oath of God, *Heb. 6. 14.* and other more than ordinary solemnities, *Gen. 15. 9, 10, &c.* And, 3. a Covenant, not only made and confirmed, but a Covenant confirmed in Christ, or, (as the Original will bear) *looking toward Christ*, as Him alone, upon whom the fulfilling of that Covenant did depend, *Gen. 22. 18.* So that if this Covenant had been abrogated, whether by the Law or any other thing, there had been no necessity of sending Christ. And, 4. because this Covenant, upon Gods part was a free absolute Promise, the performance whereof did not depend upon the works of the other party, and so their unworthinesse could be no pretence for the abrogation of it: this inference from the comparison, is ver. 17. And, fourthly, Because some, in following forth the present Objection, might have urged, that though the giving of the Law did not fully abrogate the way of Justification by Faith in the Promise; Yet this much behoved to be granted, that the Law and Works were to be conjoynd, at least, with the Promise and Faith in the point of Justification; Therefore the Apostle answereth, ver. 18. that even this much cannot be granted; and that because Works and Faith, Law and Promise are inconsistent as to the point of conveying a right to the covenanted Inheritance, so that if the works of the Law have any influence upon our Justification,

and

and right to Heaven, the free-gifted Promise made of God to *Abraham*, and Faith in that Promise can have none, and thus the confirmed Covenant should yet be abrogated; the absurdity whereof he hath already shewen, to wit, ver. 17.

From Ver. 15. *Learn*, 1. Though the Servants of Jesus Christ will be necessitated sometimes to use some more than ordinary sharpness of speech in their reproofs toward the People of God committed to their charge; yet they are carefully to guard, lest their affections be imbittered against them, and would alwayes keep love and affection toward them; yea, and testifie their love to them, even when they do most sharply reprove them: for, the Apostle, though he upbraided these Galatians with folly, ver. 1. Yet here he testifieth, that nevertheless he loved them, while he calleth them *Brethren*; *Brethren*, I *speake after the manner of men*. 2. It is not only lawfull, but also exceedingly conducing for the edification of hearers, that Ministers make use of similitudes and examples, taken from things natural, (*1 Cor.* 15. 38, &c.) artificial (*1 Sam.* 3. 7.) or from common custom among men, for clearing or confirming of spiritual Truths to the understanding, and for inforcing the practice of some spiritual duty upon the will and affections, *1 Cor.* 9. 24. for, similitudes from things earthly, as being more notour unto us, do conduce much, not only to illustrate things spiritual, but also to bring them frequently to our remembrance afterwards, especially, when those earthly things, from which the similitude is taken, do occur in our daily imployments: Hence the Apostle professeth he would *speake after the manner of men*, that is, he would make use of a similitude taken from the custom of men in their civil affairs for clearing of the Truth in hand. 3. As it is lawfull for men, whether particular persons or Nations, to enter a Covenant or paction for keeping of mutual peace and friendship, and to confirm their Covenant so made by subscription, oath (*1 Sam.* 20. 16, 17.) and other lawfull and accustomed solemn-

olemnities, (*Gen. 31. 51. &c.*) that hereby it may be the more esteemed-of as sacred and inviolable: So it is a mark of extream inconstancy, and carryeth with it the guilt of high perfidie for those who have once entred such a Covenant, to disanul, alter, or adde to it at their pleasure, or to stand to it no longer than it maketh for their own advantage: for, saith he, *Though it be but a mans Covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disanulleth, or addeth thereto: No man*, to wit, even the men themselves who made the Paction; else the similitude would not quadrate to the Truth, for illustration whereof it is made use of, to wit, that even God Himself that made the Covenant with *Abraham* and his seed, could have no such purpose in giving the Law, as to alter and abrogate that Covenant, as is clear from ver. 17.

From Ver. 16. *Learn, 1.* The Covenant of Grace made with *Abraham* and his spiritual seed, is a Covenant of promise, wherein the thing promised is freely bestowed, and not from the merit or worth of our obedience and works; and herein the promises of this Covenant do differ from the promises of the Law or Covenant of Works: for, by the *Promises*, which signifie a free promise, is meant the Covenant of Grace; *to Abraham and his seed were the Promises made*: the word signifieth a free promise. 2. This Covenant of Grace is also a Covenant of *Promises*, as containing many Promises; for, although it sometime have the name of a promise, in the singular number, as ver. -- 17. from that comprehensive and chief Promise, *I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee*, *Gen. 17. -7.* yet it containeth a numerous number of other promises, which are as so many rivulets and streams, flowing from that fountain-promise presently mentioned, even the Promises of the life that now is, and of that which is to come, *1 Tim. 4. 8.* for, saith he. *To Abraham and his seed were the Promises made.* 3. This Covenant of Grace, or Promise, was entred by God with *Abraham*, as accepting the tender of it, not only for himself, but for his seed, where-
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by all his natural issue, excepting those only who were expressly excepted by God (to wit, all the posterity of *Ismael* and *Esau*, who continued and waxed worse in the apostasie of their forefathers from *Abrahams* God, *Rom.* 9. 7, 13.) were comprehended within the Covenant, by vertue whereof, though none did attain Salvation, but those only who did come up to the conditions of the Covenant, whereupon Salvation was tendered, to wit, Faith (*Habak.* 2. 4.) and Repentance (*Isa.* 55. 7.) yet all of them did enjoy the priviledge of Ordinances (*Gen.* 17. 10.) and had Salvation offered unto them, (*Job.* 4. 22.) not absolutely, but upon Gods terms revealed in His Word, to wit, if only they would believe and repent: hence, saith the Apostle, *To Abraham and his seed were the Promises made.* 4. As the Christian Church of the Gentiles is *Abrahams* spiritual seed, as well as the Church of the Jews, and was looked upon as his seed in that Covenant-promise made to *Abraham* and his seed, *Gen.* 17. -5. compared with *Rom.* 4. 16, 17-. So it is under one and the same consideration that both Jew and Gentile, and all who reckon spiritual kindred to *Abraham* are his seed, to wit, as they follow the steps of his Faith, and at least do professe that Doctrine of free Justification by Faith, wherein *Abraham* walked, *Rom.* 4. 12, (See the distinction of the *seeds*, or *children*, ver. 7. doct. 8.) for, seing the Promises, spoken of in the Text, were made to his seed, it seemeth they cannot be that Promise, which aimed principally at Christ, *In thy seed shall all Nations be blessed*, *Gen.* 22. 18. but the Promises made to his seed, the Church, and chiefly that Promise, *I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed*, *Gen.* 17. -7. besides the mentioning of *seed* in the singular number, were not an argument of any weight, to prove that Christ personall was only meaned in the Promise, seing *seed* is a word collective, and may comprehend a number under it, even in the singular number, as the words *Flock*, *Army*, and such like; so it seemeth most probable, that by the *seed* here is meaned Christ mystical, or Christ with
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His Body the Church, made up both of Jew and Gentile, who reckon spiritual kindred unto *Abraham*, upon one and the same account; and therefore are designed in the Promise by seed, and not seeds; *He saith not, And so seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed.* 5. So strict and near is that union which is betwixt Christ and the Church, that not only is He the Churches Head (*Eph. 1. 22.*) but also as the Church is His Body and fulnesse, *Eph. 1. 23.* So Christ is mystically and virtually the fulnesse of the Church, in so far as it is He dwelling and working in them by the efficacy of His Spirit, who separateth them from the world, maketh them one mystical Body among themselves, and one with Himself, and worketh all their works in them, even those which belong to Him, not only as the Head, but, which also belong to them, as Members of the Body, *1 Cor. 12. 11, 12.* for, hence is it, that the whole believing seed of *Abraham*, is here called *Christ*, He being the bond of their union, *Job. 17. 21.* the fountain of their life and motion, *Job. 4. 14.* and the active immediate principle from which all their spiritual actions do flow, *Job. 15. 5. And to thy seed, which is Christ, saith he.*

From Vers. 17. *Learn, 1.* That though God might have dealt with man by way of sovereignty, as an absolute Monarch, enjoying to man his duty, without giving him any ground to hope for a reward of his service; yet He hath been graciously pleased to wave such right, and to deal with him by way of covenant, or pacti-
 on and agreement, upon just and equal terms, prescribed by God Himself, in which God promisseth true happiness to man, and man engageth himself by promise for performance of what God requireth: for, as these are the terms in general upon which God did ever enter any Covenant with man; so the Apostle supposeth, that Gods dealing with man is by way of a Covenant, while he saith, *And this I say, that the Covenant that was confirmed before of God.* 2. So merciful is God, that after the Covenant of Works, made with man before the fall, was broken

broken by *Adam* (*Gen. 3. 6.*) and made uselesse unto all his posterity, as to the obtaining of Heaven and happinesse by it, ver. 10. he was graciously pleased to enter a Covenant of Grace with fallen man, to deliver him from the estate of sin and misery, and to bring him into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer, *Rom. 3. 21, 22.* This is that Covenant here spoken of; *The Covenant that was before confirmed of God in Christ.* 3. Though the Covenant, or Pactiō, entered by God with the Church, before Christ came in the flesh, did differ in the way of administration, and in some considerable circumstances, from that Covenant which God hath entered with His people in the dayes of the Gospel, upon which account they are distinguished by the names of *Old* and *New*, (*Heb. 8. 13.*) *First* and *Second* Covenant, *Heb. 8. 7.* yet both these Covenants are one and the same in substance, and do fully agree in all the essential parts: for, the Apostle's intent, is, to prove, that we are justified under the New Testament, by that Covenant, which *was confirmed before of God in Christ unto Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the Law.* 4. So prone is fallen man to misbelieve the truth and reality of Gods offer in the Covenant of Grace, *Job. 4. 48.* and especially to question the making out of that offer to himself in particular, *Psa. 88. 4, 5. &c.* and so willing is God to have all doubts of that kind fully satisfied, *Heb. 6. 17.* that though His gracious word of promise be of it self worthy of all acceptance and trust, *1 Tim. 1. 15.* yet He hath been graciously pleased to adde all those confirmations unto His Covenant-grant, which are used among men, who being most suspected would most gladly be trusted. He hath committed it to writing, *Job. 20. 31.* confirmed it by witnesses, (*Heb. 2. 3.*) with miracles (*Heb. 2. 4.*) by oath (*Heb. 6. 13, 17.*) and by seals, *Mat. 26. 28. & 28. 19.* compared with *Rom. 4. 11.* for, saith he, *The Covenant that was before confirmed of God.* 5. The Covenant of Grace had a special relation to Jesus Christ, as well under the Old Administration as under the New; He being

being that Seed of the Woman, who was to bruise the head of the Serpent, (*Gen. 3. - 15.*) and in whom all the Nations of the earth were to be blessed, (*Gen. 22. 18.*) and the substance of all those ceremonial shadows, (the practice whereof was then enjoined) *Col. 2. 17.* and being the thing signified in all their Sacraments, *1 Cor. 5. 7. 1 Cor. 10. 4.* and God's design in giving the Law, being to drive men to Christ for righteousness, *Rom. 10. 4.* for, saith he, *The Covenant was confirmed before of God in Christ*, or, *tending towards Christ*, as the Original will bear. 6. The knowledge of Scripture-chronologie, whereby we know not only those things which are mentioned in Scripture-story, but also the time when every thing did fall out, so far as may be gathered by the Scripture it self chiefly, is necessary and profitable for the better understanding of God's mind in diverse parts of His Word: for here, the Apostle observeth the time when the Law was given, and layeth the great stresse of his argument upon it, whereby he proveth, that the Law could not disanul the Covenant of free-grace, made with Abraham, even because *the Law was four hundred and thirty years after the Covenant was confirmed of God in Christ*: The beginning of which space of years, is to be reckoned from the first solemn sanction and confirmation of the Covenant by God to Abraham, *Gen. 15. 8. &c.* and the close of it was at the giving of the Law upon mount Sinai, which was the first year of *Israels* coming out of Egypt, *Exod. 19. 1.* Doct. 7. God's intent in giving the Law, and urging exact obedience to it under hazard of the curse, neither was, nor is, that hereby people should be taken-off from seeking righteousness and life eternal only by faith in the Promise, or, that they should set about the practice of duties commanded by the Law, as that which was to make them righteous before God: the Law was given for other ends, as the Apostle doth after declare; but not for this: for, he sheweth here, that Gods design in giving the Law, could not disanul the Covenant made with Abraham, or, make the Promise of none effect.

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From Vers. 18. *Learn, 1.* So subtil is the spirit of Error, that it will seem to cede somewhat to Truth, as hereby intending to prejudge the Truth more than if it had ceded nothing : for, the oppugners of Justification by Faith, did sometimes give Faith some place in Justification, and pleaded only for a joynt influence of Works and Faith, of the Law and the Promise : which conceit of theirs, the Apostle doth here refute ; *For, if the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promise.* 2. The state of Grace and Favour with God here, and of Glory hereafter, is the inheritance, portion and heirship of the Lord's People ; there being no temporal worldly inheritance which can sufficiently furnish the heart with satisfaction, *Psal. 4. 6, 7.* of which spiritual and heavenly Inheritance, the Land of *Canaan* was a type : for, the Apostle speaking of Justification, and all the spiritual blessings which flow from it, calleth them the *Inheritance*, by way of excellency ; *If the Inheritance be of the Law.* 3. There are only two ways of attaining a right to this Inheritance ; one, by the Law, or by Works done in obedience to the Law, chap. 2. 16-. which was the tenour of the Covenant of Works ; the other, is by the Promise, or, by Faith in Jesus Christ offered in the Promise, chap. 2. -16-. according to the tenour of the Covenant of Grace. The Apostle speaketh of these two ways here, *If the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promise.* 4. There can be no mixture of these two, so that a right to Heaven should be obtained, partly by the merit of Works, and partly by Faith in the promise ; the one of those removeth the other : for, saith he, *If the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promise.* 5. The only way of attaining right to this Inheritance now since the fall, is, by God's Free-gift, without the merit of Works : for, *God did give it to Abraham*, the father of all justified persons : the word signifieth, He gave it freely, without respect had to *Abraham's* works. 6. The tender and offer of this gracious gift, is made in the promises of the Gospel ; which, being laid hold upon by Faith,

Faith, do entitle the Believer to the tendered Inheritance, 1 *Job.* 5. 10, 11, 12. for, saith he, *God gave it by Promise.*

Verf. 19. Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made, and it was ordained by Angels in the hand of a Mediator.

20. Now a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God is one.

HERE is a second Objection, to wit, If the Law, or works done in obedience to the Law, do not justify. Then it seemeth the Law hath been given by *Moses* upon mount *Sinai* in vain and to no purpose: which Objection is expressed in a Question, the meaning whereof, is, For what end was the Law at that time delivered, containing such a number of precepts, enjoining so many moral, judicial and ceremonial duties, promising life unto the obedient? *Lev.* 18. 5. and threatening God's wrath and curse to the disobedient, *Deut.* 27. 26. wherefore was all this, if the inheritance of life eternal come not by the works of the Law? The Apostle answereth, shewing, first, one main end for which the Law was added to the Promise, and so much inculcated at that time, to wit, for the discovery (*Rom.* 3. --20.) and restraint of sin, *Numb.* 15. 39. and for the more thorough-conviction of the sinners lost and cursed estate in himself because of sin, *Rom.* 3. 19. He sheweth, secondly, that this servile and childish discipline, as having more of error than love in it, was to continue only during the infant-state of the Church, until at Christ's coming in the flesh that spiritual seed of *Abraham*, to whom the Promise was made, should appear compleat in its principal parts, and both Jew and Gentile be gathered into one Body. But, thirdly, lest he should seem to debase the Law too much, he commendeth it, partly from the ministry of the Angels used therein, *Heb.* 2. 2, *Act.* 7. 38. and

and partly from the mediation of *Moses*, who did communicate the Word of the Law from God to the people, *Deut. 5. 5.* Which latter, as it serveth to commend the Law, so also to inforce the Apostle's main scope, to wit, That the precepts and threatnings of the Law were only added because of transgressions, and that God intended no such thing, as thereby to hold forth to the people of *Israel* a Covenant of life upon condition of obedience to what the Law required, seeing there was a necessity to make use of *Moses*, as a midf-man, to speak between God and the people; which did argue them to be conscious to themselves of their own guilt, and therefore durst not approach unto God, *Exod. 20. -18. 19.* And therefore, fourthly, The Apostle proveth this consequence, (ver. 20.) from the office of a Mediator, which is not used but only betwixt disagreeing parties, whence he leaveth them to gather that it had been altogether in vain for God to have entred a Covenant for life, upon condition of works, with such a guilty sinfull people, as could not fulfill the condition required in that Covenant; and consequently could reap no advantage by it, especially seeing, as he expressly affirmeth, God is alwayes one, consonant to Himself, and doth not dispense with one jot of that perfect, universal and constant obedience, required as the condition of obtaining Salvation according to the tenour of the Covenant of Works, *Deut. 27. 26.*

From Vers. 19. *Learn, 1.* So bent are men upon the abuse of things, in themselves good, (whether divine Ordinances, or any other gift bestowed by God upon them) that they cannot difference betwixt the right use and the abuse of these things, and are apt to conclude, if they may not abuse them to gratifie some one lust or other, that they can serve for no use to them, and so are given by God in vain: Thus the false Apostles concluded, that if the Law was not given to justify, it was wholly uselesse; *Wherefore then serveth the Law?* say they. 2. As the Moral Law (*Gen. 13.8.*) together with

the powerfull working of Gods Spirit in the Regenerate, (*Gen. 39. 9.*) and Gods restraining grace, (*Gen. 30. 6.*) the discipline of the Church, (*Gen. 9. 25.*) and the power of Magistracy which then was (*Gen. 9. 6.*) did serve to discover and restrain transgressions, and to convince sinners of their lost estate because of sin, before the Law given upon mount *Sinai*, and do yet serve for the same uses and ends to the christian Church: So the Lord was pleased in renewing the Covenant of Grace with His People upon mount *Sinai*, to cast it in such a legal mould, as that hereby He might bring down the pride of that stiff-necked people, and the more effectually convince them of sin, and of Gods curse due to them for sin: which legal dispensation of the Covenant, did stand in this mainly, that the duties and curses of the Law were held forth frequently, fully and clearly, *Exod. 20. 2, &c. Deut. 5. 6, &c. 27. 15, &c. and 28. 15, &c.* and the Promises chiefly of eternal life; yea, and of Christ and remission of sins, but sparingly, and for the most part very obscurely under the vail of earthly shadows and ceremonies, *2 Cor. 3. 13.* and under some dark prophecies, *Isa. 53. 7. 8.* compared with *Act. 8. 34.* And besides all this, there was a yoke of other duties, over and above the duties of the Moral Law, laid upon them, to wit, the duties of the Law both judicial and ceremonial, *Exod. 24. Lev. 1.* and obedience to them most strictly urged, and that under hazard of the same so much reiterated curse, *Deut. 27. 26.* for, saith he, *The Law was added*, to wit, on mount *Sinai*, and added to the Covenant-promise made to *Abraham*, because of transgressions. Now, he cannot mean the Moral Law, as to the substance of it; for, that did perpetually sound in the Church ever since it was a Church, even before *Moses*, *Gen. 18. 19.* and so it was not then added: neither doth he mean by the Law, that whole Doctrine, which was delivered from God upon mount *Sinai*; for, that Doctrine did contain in it a Covenant of Grace, the very promise of salvation and pardon of sin through the Messiah to come,

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Luke 24. 19. which was formerly made to *Abram*, only it was cloathed with a more legal dispensation ; and so the Law taken so generally, cannot be said to have been added. It remaineth therefore, that by the Law, which was then added to the Promise because of transgressions, must be meant that legal dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, set down in the body of this second Doctrine, whereby it did at the first view, and without very accurate inspection, appear to be a Covenant of Works; although it was really a Covenant of Grace. 3. This legal dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, was not to continue alwayes in the Church, but until the partition-wall being broken down at Christ's death (*Eph. 2. 14, 15, 16.*) the Gentiles should be called unto the fellowship of the Church, and, together with the Jews, make up one compleat seed unto *Abram* : then was the yoke of judicial (*Gen. 49. 10.*) and ceremonial duties (*Act. 15. 10.*) to be taken off; the vail of shadows and dark prophecies, whereby Christ and free-grace were hid and covered, to be laid aside, *2 Cor. 3. 11, 12.* And though the duties of the Moral Law are yet to be pressed (*Col. 3. 18, &c.*) and the curse of the Law to be denounced against all who are in their natural estate, *Col. 3. 6.* yet covenanted grace and furniture for duty, *Job. 1. 17.* and Christ's becoming a curse for us, to redeem us from the curse of the Law, are more clearly held forth now in the dayes of the Gospel (*ver. 13.*) than they were formerly : for, saith he, *It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come, to whom the Promise was made.* 4. The Gospel is so to be commended and preferred unto the Law, as nothing of that honour and respect which is due unto the Law, be taken from it ; and the Doctrine of the Law and Gospel are to be so bounded, as neither may encroach upon the other : for, lest Paul in setting limits between the Law and the Gospel, should seem to vilifie the Law, he commendeth it from this, *That it was ordained by Angels in the hand, or, by the ministry and service, of a Mediator.* 5. Though *Moses* was the Media-

tor here spoken of (*Deut. 5. 5.*) yet it followeth not, that Angels and Saints are Mediators in Heaven ; for *Moses* was present with the people , and ordained a Mediator by God for this one act, which was to relate and report the Law from God to the people : now it can carry no shew of reason, from this to conclude, that therefore the Saints, who are absent in Heaven, and so are ignorant of us, (*Isa. 63. 16.*) or, that either Saint or Angel should be constituted Mediators to report our prayers and the secrets of our hearts unto God, especially seeing no Scripture doth prove that any such office is put upon them by God ; *It was ordained in the hand of a Mediator.*

From Vers. 20. *Learn*, 1. Conscience of guilt presenteth God as terrible, and taketh away all confidence from the guilty sinner to approach in a friendly manner by himself to a provoked God : for, no entercourse can be between God and His people, when they are not one, but differ by reason of His peoples sin ; *A Mediator is not of one*, saith he : there was a disagreement through sin, which called for a Mediator. 2. The Covenant of Works, entred with *Adam* in the state of innocency, was immediate, no Mediator intervening to make them one, wherein it differeth from the Covenant of Grace, *Heb. 8. 6.* for, God and man, before the fall, were one , and no disagreement betwixt them because of sin ; and so there was no use for a Mediator in the Covenant that was then made : for, *A Mediator is not a Mediator of one*, saith *Paul*. 3. No man can attain to Heaven, or reap any advantage by a Covenant of Works, except he were perfectly holy, and as free of sin as *Adam* was before his fall : for the Apostle, proving that God made no Covenant of Works with them upon mount *Sinai*, and that they could have reaped no benefit by such a Covenant, thinketh it sufficient to evince, that they were then a sinful people ; which he evinceth from this, that they stood in need of a Midst-man betwixt God and them ; *Now a Mediator is not a Mediator of one*, saith he. 4. The Lord in all His dispensations is alwayes one , and like to Him-

Himself, without any shadow of turning, *Jam. 1. -17.* His work and way of dealing, may, and hath changed, even His way of dispensing the Covenant of Grace to His Church, *Heb. 8. 8, 9.* but He remaineth unchangeable, there being no change of that kind which He hath not fore-ordained by His unchangeable decree, *Eph. 1. -11.* Thus he saith, *God is one*, that is, with relation to the present scope; If any plead a right to Heaven, for the merit of their works, God will abate nothing of what He Himself did once prescribe and require of man in the Covenant of Works.

Verf. 21. Is the Law then against the Promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a Law given which could have given life, verily Righteousness should have been by the Law.

22. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the Promise by Faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Followeth the third Objection, to wit, If the Law be given to discover and condemn for transgressions, as is affirmed, *ver. 19.* Then it is contrary to the Covenant-promise, which doth cover and pardon sin, quicken and justify the sinner. He answereth, 1. by denying and rejecting the consequence as absurd and abominable. 2. By retorting the Argument against the Adversaries themselves: for, if the Law, or, if our works done in obedience to the Law, could procure eternal life, as they affirmed, Then our righteousness before God, should consist in Works, or, the Law should justify; leaving them to gather, that this would suppose the former Covenant by promise to be abolished and quite destroyed by the Law; so that, according to their Doctrine, the Law was both contrary unto, and destructive of the Promise, *ver. 21.* 3. He answereth directly, shewing the Law, called here *the Scripture*, (or, *that Scripture*, as it is in the Original) while it convinceth, accuseth and

condemneth all mankind for sin, and so concludeth and incloseth all men under sin, and the curse due to sin, as the Judge doth the malefactor in prison, is not contrary, but subordinate and subservient to the Promise, in so far, as that hereby the guilty sinner, (being made to lay aside all confidence in his own righteousness, *Rom. 7. 9.*) doth flee by Faith in Jesus Christ for a refuge to the Promise; and so the thing promised, to wit, Righteousness and Salvation, becometh the sinner's, and is conveyed unto him, to wit, upon his believing.

From *Verf. 21. Learn, 1.* It is the way of Hereticks to set Scripture against Scripture, and to make one Scripture seem to contradict another, except their erroneous sense and interpretation of Scripture be received, as intended by the Spirit of God: for, these false Apostles did affirm, if so the Law did not give life, but did only discover and accuse for transgressions, then God's mind in the Law should have been contrary to His mind revealed in the Promise: Hence *Paul* propoundeth this question unto himself to answer, *Is the Law then against the Promises of God?* 2. However Hereticks may labour to fasten such absurdities upon Truth, as if it were contrary to some other parts of God's mind revealed in Scripture; yet their bold allegations will be found alwayes false, and Truth to be ever most consonant, and never contrary to it self: for, so the Apostle sheweth of the Truth in hand; *God forbid*, saith he. 3. There are some sins (chiefly those that do most directly reflect upon any divine perfection, or attribute of God) the very first motions whereof, ought to be entertained with abhorrency and detestation; and this either when a temptation to commit such sins is presented to us, *Job 2. 9, 10.* or, when the guilt of them, as already committed, is intended to be unjustly fastned upon us: for, when *Paul's* adversaries would have charged him with making the Law to contradict the Promise, and so God to be changeable, and not consonant to Himself; he rejecteth this blasphemous charge with a *God forbid*; an

expression frequently used by the Apostle to set out his high indignation against somewhat, wherewith his person or doctrine was charged, *Rom. 3. 4. 6. Rom. 6. 2. Gal. 4.* As these absurdities, wherewith the adversaries of Truth are ready to brand the Truth unjustly, do oftentimes by direct and just consequences most directly follow upon that Error, which they themselves maintain: so, in order to the refutation of Error, (besides the alleging of such Reasons and Scripture-Truths as do directly overthrow the Error) it is lawfull and also convenient, to present those absurdities which do natively flow from it; that in these the absurdity of the Error itself may be seen, seeing no absurd and false position can be drawn by just consequence from that which is a Truth: Thus the Apostle, refuting that error of Justification by Works, doth charge it with that absurdity which his adversaries did labour to fasten upon the contrary Truth, even of being contrary to the Covenant-promise, while he saith, *If there had been a Law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law,* and so the Promise had been abolished and made uselesse.

5. No man can attain to life eternal, being destitute of some righteousness, whereby he may be made righteous: for, according to the Apostle, *If the Law could give life, to wit eternal life, it behoved also to have given righteousness; verily righteousness should have been by the Law.*

6. So exact and full is that righteousness that is required in order to life, (See ver. 10.) and so far short do all mankind come of that righteousness in themselves, *Rom. 3. 23.* that no works of our own, done in obedience to the Law, can amount to that righteousness: for, he speaketh of it as a great absurdity once to imagine, *that righteousness should have been by the Law.*

7. Whoever maintain a life-procuring righteousness by Works, they do in effect abolish and destroy that Free-grace held forth in the Promise, in so far as they make the Promise uselesse and in vain, ascribing that to Works, which is the proper effect of Grace in the Promise, and which cannot

be effectuated by our imperfect Works ; for when, according to the strain of the argument, it would have been said, *Verily* the Law should have been contrary to the Promise, in its place, and as the equivalent of that, he saith, *Verily righteousness should have been by the Law.*

From Vers. 22. *Learn*, 1. Though all men by nature be under sin (*Rom. 3. 10.*) and the deserved curse of the Law because of sin, *Eph. 2. 3.* yet, it is a matter of no small difficulty to convince any man of, or to affect his heart sensibly either with the one or the other : for, the work of the Law its accusing, convincing or condemning the sinner for sin, is compared to the work of a Judge detaining a malefactor in prison, which is not effectuated but with a kind of force and violence : *The Scripture hath concluded all under sin* ; the word carryeth a metaphor, taken from a Judge his imprisoning of malefactors. 2. The Scripture, especially the Law of God in its strict commands, large accusations, and most severe threatnings, doth serve abundantly to convince all mankind to be heinous sinners, and under the drop of God's terrible curse for sin, and this so forcibly, that there is not the least wicket patent for him, whereby he may either deny his sin, or escape deserved wrath, by any thing which can be performed by himself : for, *The Scripture*, or, that Scripture, to wit, the Law especially, *hath concluded all under sin*, as in a most strict prison or dungeon ; for, so the word beareth : and although by the Law here, be mainly and firstly meant that legall dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, which stood in force during the time of the Old Testament, (*See ver. 19. doct. 2.*) that thereby this conviction might be the more effectually brought about ; yet the pressing of the duties of the Moral Law, and inculcating the curse thereof upon those who are in an unrenewed estate, do serve to conclude all under sin yet, *Luke 13. 3. Doct. 3.* The Law of God doth serve to convince all men, not only that they are sinners, but also that all their actions, counsels, endeavours, and whatsoever proceedeth from any
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of their unrenewed faculties (*Gen. 6. 5.*) are altogether sinful, and most justly deserving God's wrath and curse: for, he saith, *The Scripture hath concluded all* (not only all men, but all things, to wit, all things proceeding from men) *under sin.* 4. So ignorant are men of Gods righteousness revealed in the Gospel, and so averse are they from closing with it, when it is made in some measure known, *Job. 5. 40.* So bent are they to establish their own righteousness, according to the Law, *Rom. 10. 3.* that untill the Law of God convince them of their altogether sinfull and cursed estate by nature; yea, and that they can do nothing but sin, they will never be induced to quit all confidence in their own righteousness, and flee, by Faith in Jesus Christ, for obtaining of righteousness and salvation, according to the tenour of the Gospel and Promise: for, God did not only under the Old Testament, but also doth under the New (*Act. 2. 37.*) use that piece of divine artifice, *to conclude all under sin, that the Promise* (or, thing promised) *by Faith in Jesus Christ may be given:* the Promise is not given, because none will take it, untill that concluding under sin precede. 5. The Lord's design in pressing the duties, and thundring out the curses of the Law for disobedience, is meerly this, that sinners being hereby convinced of their cursed estate in themselves, and made desperate of obtaining Heaven and Salvation by their own Works, may be in a manner prepared, and, as it were, necessitated, by Faith to imbrace that free-gift of Salvation held forth through Christ in the Promise: for, saith he, *The Scripture hath concluded all men under sin;* not of purpose to condemn us, but *that the Promise by Faith of Jesus Christ might be given unto them who believe.* 6. The heavenly inheritance, and all the other blessings promised in the Covenant of Grace, do not belong promiscuously unto all whom the Law concludeth under sin, but only to those who by Faith do imbrace and close with them as they are offered in the Promise: for, saith he, *That the Promise,* (or, the thing promised) *might be given to them*

them that believe. 7. That Faith which entitleth to the Promise, is not a general faith in God as Creator, such as the faith of Turks; but it is Faith in Jesus the son of Mary, Mat. 1. 25. who is that Christ or Messiah, who, being promised under the Old Testament, (Isa. 7. 14.) is now come under the New: it is this Faith relying on Christ, who by His merit hath purchased the thing promised, Isa. 53. 5. which giveth a right unto the Promise: for, to specify what Believers they are to whom the Promise is given, he addeth, *by the Faith of Jesus Christ.*

Verf. 23. *But before Faith came, we were kept under the Law, shut up unto the Faith, which should afterwards be revealed.*

24. *Wherefore the Law was our School-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by Faith.*

25. *But after that Faith is come, we are no longer under a School-master.*

26. *For ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus.*

IN these words the Apostle answereth a fifth Objection, and doth more directly handle that point concerning the abrogation of the ceremonial Law; yea, of the whole Mosaical Dispensation, now, under the dayes of the Gospel: The Adversaries might have objected, Seeing the Law, or that legal Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, was so usefull unto the ancient Church, and so subservient to the Promise, as is affirmed, ver. 22. Then why did Paul cry down the use of it, especially the practice of the ceremonial Law now? The Apostle answereth by distinguishing times, and sheweth, that *before Faith came*, whereby he meaneth not the grace of saving Faith, (for, that was alwayes in the Church, Heb. 11. 4. &c.) but either Christ, called *Faith*, because He is the object of Faith (in which sense He is called our hope, 1 Tim. 1. 1.) or, the full manifestation of the Doctrine of Faith, which was about the time of Christ's death and ascension,

ascension; he granteth (I say) that before that time, the use of the Law was first necessary to the Jews, because they were by the Law, as by a military guard, kepted, to wit chiefly, from being mixed with other Nations, whether in Religion or Policy, *Eph. 2. 14.* Secondly, It was saving to them, in so far as it did shut up, conclude, and enclose them, as it were, in a prison, (for it's the same word, and that same purpose more fully expressed, which is *ver. 22.*) under sin and the curse due to sin, that hereby they might be in a manner prepared, and, as it were, necessitated to imbrace the Doctrine of Salvation by Faith in Jesus Christ, which was then but darkly, *Mat. 11. 11.* and afterwards more clearly revealed, the full revelation whereof, they were by this mean, kept more intent upon, *ver. 23.* Which latter use of the Law, he illustrateth and concludeth, by shewing the Law, as a Pedagogue or Schoolmaster, did with much rigor and servitude, govern and rule the Church then in her infancy and childhood, and thereby did lead the Elect unto Christ, that they might be justified by faith. The Apostle having thus shewed (*ver. 23, 24.*) that the Law, that is, the legal dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, was for good use to the ancient Church, denyeth that therefore the use of it should be continued now, when the doctrine of Faith is clearly manifested; yea, by the contrary, he sheweth it was then to be abrogated, and the Christian Church freed from the observation of it, because it exercised only the office of a Schoolmaster over children, and so can have no authority over the Church, and especially Believers now, *ver. 25.* which he proveth from this, That the Christian Church, and all of them, to wit Jew and Gentile, were like a son come to age, because of their Faith in Christ Jesus already come; and so was to be dealt with no longer as a childe under a Schoolmaster, *ver. 26.*

From *Vers. 23. Learn, 1.* Though there was Gospel, or the Doctrine of Salvation by Free-grace, held forth, to be laid hold upon by Faith, unto the ancient Church,

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ver. 8. yet it was so obscurely and sparingly propounded then, and so clearly and largely manifested now, That the Scripture speaketh as if that Doctrine had not been at all in the Church then, but only revealed now in the dayes of the Gospel: for here, he calleth all the time of the Old Testament, the time *before Faith came*, or before the Doctrine of Free-grace, the object of Faith came, and that *this Faith was afterwards to be revealed*, to wit, because it was but sparingly revealed then. 2. Besides other differences betwixt the administration of the Covenant of Grace under the Old Testament, and under the New, this was one, the old administration was extended only to the Jews, *Psal. 147. 19, 20.* and to some of other Nations, who, forgetting their own People, (*Psal. 45. 10.*) joyned themselves to them; but the new is extended to all Nations, *Mat. 28. 19.* for, this difference is here hinted at, while the Apostle (speaking of those who were under that old dispensation, ver. 23, 24.) speaketh of them in the first person, *We were kept under, &c.* *We*, that is, the Nation of the Jews, whereof *Paul* was one; but, speaking of those who are under the new Dispensation, he mentioneth not only the Jews, under the pronoun of the first person, *We*, ver. 25. but also the Gentiles, under the pronoun of the second person, *Ye*, ver. 26. for *ye*, saith he, to wit, the Galatians of the Gentiles, *are all the Children of God.* 3. The administration of the Covenant of Grace under the Old Testament by so many Rites, Sacrifices, Ceremonies, such a system of politick Laws, such rigid pressing of moral duties, with the annexed promises of eternal life, and threatenings of Gods wrath and curse, (the Gospel-promise all the while being hid, as it were, behind the curtain) among other uses, did serve for a hedge, or a place of military defence, to keep that ancient People, of whom Christ was to come, distinct and separate from all other Nations, as a besieged city is guarded by walls, ditches, and armed souldiers from the irruption of enemies: for, this is aimed at while he saith, *We were kept under the Law,*

to wit, as by a military guard; for so the word signifieth. It's true, they were also-kept from going astray, either in Religion, or in life and conversation; but that use of the Law was mentioned, v. 19. *Doct. 4.* The hard servitude wherewith the ancient Church was pressed, and under which she was, as to her outward estate, as it did forcibly constrain the Elect among them, to quit their own righteousness, and to betake themselves for righteousness and life unto Faith in the promised Messiah, as knowing somewhat from Scripture (*Hag. 2. 6, 7.* compared with *Heb. 12. 26, 27.*) that then the Church should be eased of that hard servitude and bondage: for, in both these respects, the Law did *shut them up unto the Faith afterwards to be revealed*, making them close with the Doctrine of Free-grace for Salvation by Faith in the mean time, and earnestly to expect the full revelation of it by the Messiah, *Joh. 4. 25.*

From Vers. 24. *Learn, 1.* The Church of God, considered as a politick body, and with relation to her different state in several times, hath some resemblance to the age of a man, as having had her infancy under the Patriarchs, her childhood under *Moses*, and her perfect age under the Gospel: which different states, and, as it were, several ages of the Church, did arise, partly from the Churches rudeness and incapacity to comprehend spiritual Truths in their native beauty and lustre, which were alwayes the greater, by how much the Church was nearer her beginning: and partly, from the different measure and degrees, wherein the promise and way of Salvation by the Messiah, were made known to the Church; the manifestation whereof, was first very obscure, *Gen. 3. 15.* but afterwards alwayes more and more clear, untill at last, according to the foregoing prophecies, (*Mal. 4. 2.*) The Sun of Righteousness, at Christ's incarnation, death and ascension, did arise with healing under his wings: The Apostle pointeth at those several ages of the Church, while he representeth the Jewish Church as a child under a pedagogue in this verse, and more fully, chap.

chap. 4. ver. 3. and the Christian Church, as men of perfect age, and so no longer under a Schoolmaster, ver. 27, 28. *Ded.* 2. The Lord's visible way of dispensing Grace and covenanted Blessings by external means, hath not been alwayes one and the same, but diverse according to the temper and complexion of His Church in her several states and ages; so that as the Churches state was more rude and earthly, or more polished and spiritual, the Lord did train her up under a more rude or spiritual form of Worship; thus the Church, while in her infancy and childhood, was under a *Pedagogue*, whose charge is to attend children; *The Law was our Schoolmaster*; but now, being come to grown age, she is no longer under a Schoolmaster. 3. The Lord's way of dispensing Grace under the Old Testament, as it is set down in the Law given by *Moses*, was very suitable to the childish and infant-state of the Church, the Lord dealing with them in a way much like to that, whereby Schoolmasters do train up children at Schools: for, under this dispensation there were, first, a whip and rod, to make the refractory stand in awe, even the frequent inculcating of God's curse (*Deut.* 27. 15, &c.) and comminations of temporal calamities (*Deut.* 28. 16, &c.) and also many ceremonial penances, in their many washings and purifications, *Lev.* 15. through the whole chapter. Secondly, there were allurements also for those, who were of better and softer natures, to gain and keep them in obedience, such as did besit the state and condition of that People, even frequently reiterated promises of temporal blessings, (*Deut.* 28. 3, &c.) and also an earthly inheritance, *Isa.* 2. 19. Thirdly, there were restraints also from the use of things (in their own nature indifferent) put upon them, under sore certifications, (*Lev.* 11. through the whole) thus to try their obedience, to bow their wills, and so to make them tractable and obedient in these other more weighty things of the Law, *1 Cor.* 9. 9, 10. And lastly, though their dignity, as sons, was not altogether kept up from them, *2 Cor.* 6. - 16, 18. yet it was but seldom made

made mention of; and the Promise, the charter of their inheritance, kept up under a dark vail, 1 Cor. 3. 13. and they themselves made to serve under hard servitude and bondage, as if they had not been sons but servants, chap. 4. 3. *Wherefore the Law was our Schoolmaster*, saith he, 4. God's great design and scope in all this pedagogy of the Law, was, that thereby souls might be directed unto Christ, and made to close with Him for righteousness, Rom. 10. 4. The frequent inculcating of the Moral Law and Promises of life upon their obedience, did convince them how far they were from that exact righteousness, which God required; and that therefore they behaved to seek for righteousness some-where else, which was enforced by the threatnings of the Law, shewing that otherwise they would perish. The Ceremonies, Sacrifices, and frequent Washings, did also tend to this, even to convince them of, and to keep their eye fixed upon their own filthiness and deserved damnation, and to make them seek for righteousness, satisfaction to provoked Justice, and the expiation of their sin, in that alone sacrifice of the death and blood of Christ, Heb. 9. 9, 10, 11. for, saith he, *The Law was our Schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ*. 3. The Godly, under the Old Testament, were justified by Faith; laying hold upon Christ for righteousness, even as we are now: for, saith he, *The Law did bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by Faith*.

From Vers. 25. *Learn*, 1. The proposing unto our selves to bring about a good, necessary and spiritual end, is not sufficient to justify our use-making of whatsoever means, we may conceive to be, or sometimes have been approved of God, as conducive for that end, except those means have a present stamp of divine approbation for the using of them; God's end is to be endeavoured by His own means: for, though the bringing of us to Christ for righteousness be as necessary now under the Gospel, as it was under the Law, and though the pedagogy of the Law of Moses was an approved mean for

for bringing about that end under the Old Testament ; yet *Paul* will not grant. That therefore it should now be made use of in order to that end, because under the dayes of the Gospel, the ty of divine authority enjoying the use-making of that Schoolmaster, is ceased; *But after that Faith is come, we are no longer under a Schoolmaster*, saith he ; and therefore are not to subject our selves unto him. 2. Though the curse of the moral Law is to be denounced against all impenitent sinners in the Christian Church, that hereby they may be constrained to flee unto Christ for righteousness, *Joh. 3. 36.* and the precepts thereof are to be urged upon the Regenerate, as the rule of their obedience, *Eph. 6. 1, &c.* and though the exact righteousness, required in the Law, doth serve as a glasse, wherein even the Renewed may see their manifold failings, *Rom. 7. 14, &c.* and so be necessitated to betake themselves daily to the bloud of sprinkling for pardon, *Rom. 7. 25.* (In which respects, the moral Law may be called a Schoolmaster even to the christian Church, and a Schoolmaster to bring them to Christ) yet the christian Church is fully freed from that legal dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, which was added to the Covenant-promise upon mount *Sinai*, which what it was, is explained, ver. 19. doct. 2. and ver. 24. doct. 3. *For after that Faith is come, we are no more under this Schoolmaster*, saith he.

From Vers. 26. *Learn, 1.* The Church of God under the New Testament, as to her outward state, is in a state of Sonship or Adoption, which noteth her freedom from that rigor and servitude, under which the ancient Church was through the outward legal dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, chap. 4. 3. and the truly godly have some peculiar dignity added in relation to the grace of Adoption over and above what Believers under the Old Testament had, in so far as the vail of that legal dispensation being removed, the generality, at least, of Believers now have more ready access to the Covenant-promise, and a clearer insight in, and knowledge of all those

privileges, which belong unto them as the sons of God, *Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24.* for, taking what the Apostle saith of their being the children of God in both or either of those respects, his intended scope is brought about, which is to shew, That the christian Church is not under the pedagogy of that Mosaical dispensation, even *for, or, because ye are all the Children of God,* saith he. 2. Though Faith in the Messiah to come, did entitle Believers under the Old Testament, to the dignity of Sons and Daughters to the Lord Almighty; yet Faith in Jesus Christ already come, doth adde some peculiar dignity of Sonship upon the christian Church, and especially upon Believers in it, even that which is presently mentioned in the preceding Doctrine, the Lord having been pleased to make the Churches full growth, and utmost perfections, (as to her privileges, and outward state and measure of access) to tryst with His Son's coming in the flesh, that so His entry to the world might be more stately, as being accompanied with such a measure of royal munificence, *Heb. 11. 40.* for, saith he, *Ye are all the children of God by Faith in Jesus Christ,* to wit, already come.

Verf. 27. *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.*

28. *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

29. *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the Promise.*

THE Apostle (having proved that the christian Church is freed from the mosaical dispensation, which was added to the Promise upon mount *Sinai*) seemeth in these verses, not only to confirm that, which he had presently asserted, of our being the children of God by Faith, because we are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, are one in Christ; but also and mainly, to obviate an

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Objection yet more made use of by the false Apostles in behalf of Circumcision, which was not added upon mount Sinai unto the Promise, but given to *Abraham* with the Promise, as the initiatory seal of the Promise, *Gen. 17. 10.* whence, it seems; they argued, That notwithstanding all that which was added upon mount Sinai, was now abrogated; yet Circumcision was to be kept in the Church, as that without which none could be *Abraham's* seed, or an heir according to the Promise. The Apostle's Answer cometh in effect to this, That Baptism into Christ, that is, which sealeth and signifieth our ingrafting into Christ, (*Rom. 6. 4.*) was substituted in the place of Circumcision, and sufficient for compassing all those ends, for which Circumcision was instituted; and that because they who are *baptized into Christ, do put on Christ*, and so are in a manner incorporate, and make one body with Him, as a man is incorporated with his garments, from which the word is borrowed, ver. 26. Which incorporation of the christian Church, and making all the members thereof one in Christ, he sheweth is effectuated without any respect had to any difference of Nations, conditions worldly, or distinction of sexes, leaving them to gather, that Circumcision (which, by vertue of its institution, did serve for keeping up a distinction between Jew and Gentile, (*Exod. 12. 48.*) could have no influence upon this businesse, ver. 28. From all which he concludeth; Seing Baptism doth testifie and seal up Christ's interest in those who are baptized, as His and their union with Christ, who is the real Head of the blessed Race, through whom alone *Abraham* and his seed were to be blessed, That therefore *ipso facto*, and without any more ado, they were *Abraham's* seed, and apparent heirs of that heavenly inheritance, given unto *Abraham* by promise, and so, that there was no necessity, in order to this end, of joyning them to the blessed Nation by Circumcision, as the ancient Profelytes were, and, as the false Apostles alleaged, should yet be practised, ver. 29.

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From Vers. 27. *Learn, 1.* Though Circumcision the initiatory Seal, and leading Sacrament of the Covenant under the Old Testament. (*Exod. 12. 48.*) be now abolished with the rest of that ancient dispensation; yet, seeing the Church of God, even under the New Testament is not wholly spiritual, but in part earthly and carnal, (*Rom. 7. 14.*) standing in need to be instructed and confirmed in spiritual Truths by things sensible and earthly, *Job. 3. 12.* it hath therefore seemed good unto God to enjoin the celebration of some Sacraments in the christian Church unto the end of the world, *Mat. 28. 19, 20.* which are in signification more clear, and in use lesse painfull and burdenson; and particularly, He hath substituted Baptism in the place of Circumcision, which doth serve for all these spiritual uses now, which Circumcision did serve for then, to wit, all these uses which were of common concernment to the Church at all times, and not peculiar to the dispensation which then was: for, the Apostle, clearing how Circumcision was now abrogated, doth shew how Baptism doth it in all those necessary uses for which it did serve; *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.*

2. Among other uses for which Baptism doth serve, this is the first and chief, to signifie and seal up our ingrafting into, and union with Christ: there is an external visible union, consisting in external covenanting, and serious profession of christian Truths, either personally or parentally, which is sealed up to all visible Professors absolutely; for, they are in Him externally, *Job. 15. 2.* There is a real and saving union signified and sealed up unto all the Regenerate absolutely; for, they are in Him savingly, *Rom. 8. 1.* and to all the Members of the visible Church conditionally, if so they come up to the termes which Scripture calleth for, as necessary in order to union with Him, to wit, saving Faith: for, this much the Apostle doth import, by saying, *we are baptized into Christ*, even that our ingrafting into Him is signified and sealed by Baptism.

3. Baptism doth also signifie and

seal our putting on of Christ, to wit, by Faith; for, by Faith we make application of Christ unto our selves, *Job. 6. 40.* and Christ so applied, serveth for the same use to the soul, which garments do serve to the body; He covereth our loathsome nakedness, *Rev. 3. 18.* and is also for an ornament unto us, *Eph. 5. 27.* He communicateth heat and warmness, even those sweet refreshing influences of His Spirit, for life and godliness, *Cant. 1. 2.* and *2. 5, 6.* And Christ is thus, and for these ends put on in Baptism; partly, because Baptism engageth all who are baptized, to put Him so on, *Rom. 6. 4.* and partly, because those who are baptized inwardly by the Spirit, as well as outwardly by Water, do actually and really put Him on, *1 Pet. 3. 21.* *As many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ;* It's a metaphor taken from garments which men put on to cover, adorn, and keep themselves warm.

From Vers. 28. *Learn, 1.* Though Christian Religion abolish not those civill distinctions, which are between Nation and Nation, Master and Servant, *1 Pet. 2. 18.* or the dignity of the one sex above the other, *1 Cor. 11. 7, 8, 9.* Yet it layeth no weight upon any of these as to the point of access unto Christ and use-making of Him. Whatever Nation, rank, or sex a person be of, it is all one in this matter; none are debarred from Christ, nor yet the more accepted by Him for any of these things; for, having spoken of putting on Christ, he subjoyneth, *there is neither Jew nor Gentile, Greek, &c.* 2. After, and upon Christ's coming in the flesh, the door of Free-grace hath been much more enlarged beyond what it formerly was; so that the Greek and Gentile have all restraints taken off, and a like ready access with the Jews to Jesus Christ: for, the Apostle's main scope in this verse, is to shew, that there is no difference now between Jew and Greek; and by consequence, that Circumcision, which was one main part of the partition-wall betwixt them, was not any longer to stand in force; and what is spoken of the *bond* and *free*, *male* and *female*, seemeth

to be added for illustration and confirmation of this Truth only, except he doth also hint, that those restraints which were upon bondmen, and the female sex, as to the enjoying of some priviledges under the Old Testament, (*Gen. 17. 10. Lev. 22. 10.*) were now also taken off; *There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female.* 3. There is an union among all those who are baptized, whereby they make up, as it were, but one man, to wit, all visible Church-members of all Nations, of every condition, and of both sexes, make up one politick Body, having by divine appointment the same Laws, Government, the same kind of Office-bearers, and spiritual Courts, and enjoying the same priviledges, *1 Tim. 6. 13, 14.* And all real Believers make up one mystical and spiritual Body, as being animated, acted and ruled by one and the same Spirit of Jesus, *Act. 15. 8, 9.* for, saith he, *They are all one*, or, one man. 4. The bond and ty of the Churches union, is Jesus Christ. And according to the nature of that union, which is between Him and them, whether external and by a profession only, or internal and by vertue of saving Faith also, So is the nature of that union which is among themselves, either external or political only, or internal and mystical also; and the more that any be united and kepted near to Christ, he will be at greater nearnesse unto these who are Christ's: for, having spoken of their putting on Christ, he subjoyneth, *ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

From Vers. 29. *Learn.* 1. By vertue of our Baptism, and our putting on of Christ in Baptism, a right and interest in, and over us, doth accresse to Christ, so that we become in a peculiar manner His, seing in Baptism we enter an open and professed engagement to be wholly and only the Lord's: for, in place of resuming, *If ye, being baptized into Christ, have put on Christ,* (which was the foundation of the present inference laid down, ver. 27.) he resumeth, *If ye be Christs,* implying the one of these doth follow upon the other. 2. The Christian Church, or all who are given over unto Christ in Bap-

tism, are *Abraham's* seed, and heirs of the promised inheritance, to wit, with regard had to that distinction of seed, ver. 8. doct. 8. And hence it followeth, that the charter of this inheritance, or the Covenant betwixt God and His People, hath been alwayes for substance one and the same, and that the Church of the Old and New Testament are both one, even the self-same seed of *Abraham*, differing in nothing further than a man of perfect age, doth differ from himself being a childe, and that there is but one Faith, one Salvation, and one way of obtaining the same, under both Testaments: for, saith he, *If ye be Christs, ye are Abrahams seed*, speaking to the Christian Church. 3. Though all those fore-mentioned, be the same under both Testaments, yet there are some accidental differences, whereof one lyeth in the different wayes of incorporating persons unto that blessed society to whom the heavenly inheritance doth appertain, which then was by being circumcized, in evidence of their subjecting themselves wholly to that burdensome administration, under which the Church then was; But now it is sufficient to be baptized, and by so doing to subject our selves unto Christ: for, (in opposition to the false Apostles, who still maintained that none could be *Abraham's* seed, except they were circumcised, and would subject themselves to the Law of *Moses*) the Apostle affirmeth, *If ye be Christs, then are ye Abraham's seed, &c.*

C H A P. I V.

IN the first part of this Chapter, the Apostle doth further clear the Church's freedom from that ancient Policy of the Jewish Church by the similitude of a Pupil, and his Tutors ; which similitude is propounded, ver. 1, 2. And applyed first, to the Churches bondage under the Old Testament, ver. 3. and secondly, to her freedom from that bondage under the New, ver. 4, 5. whereof he giveth an evidence, to wit, God's bestowing upon them the Spirit of Adoption, ver. 6. and so concludeth the dispute, ver. 7.

In the second part, he laboureth upon their affections, first, by a sharp reproof for their defection, which he aggregeth, ver. 8, 9. and giveth some instances of it, ver. 10. and hinteth at the great hazard they were in because of it, ver. 11. Secondly, by a most affectionate insinuation, wherein he exhorteth them to be affectionate towards him, and sheweth how dearly he affected them, ver. 12. inforcing the former, and evidencing the latter, from his thankfull acknowledgement how affectionate they were once to him for the Truths sake, to ver. 17. And obviateth an objection taken from that intense affection which the false Apostles seemed to carry unto them, by shewing wherein their zeal and affection was defective, ver. 17. and the nature of true zeal, ver. 18. Giving evidences, that this true zeal and affection was in himself towards them, ver. 19, 20.

In the third part, he confirmeth and illustrateth the whole preceding dispute by the history of *Abraham's* family. And first, he prefaceth, desiring them to make the Old Testament judge in this controversie, ver. 21. Secondly, he propoundeth the typical history, ver. 22, 23. Thirdly, he expoundeth the mystery of the two Covenants prefigured by the history, ver. 24, 25, 26. Fourthly, he confirmeth the truth of this mystery from Scrip-

ture, ver. 27. Fifthly, he maketh application of the whole purpose, first, for information of the way to attain the heavenly inheritance, ver. 28. Secondly, for consolation against present persecutions, to the end.

Verf. 1. *N*ow I say, that the heir as long as he is a childe, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all.

2. *But is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the father.*

THe Apostle (being yet further to clear the Churches freedom from that legal external policy of the ancient Church, whereof he spake so much, chap. 3. ver. 19, &c.) doth use another similitude taken from a pupil, and his tutors and curators. And, first, having made a transition usual to him, when he is more fully to explicate any former purpose, (See chap 5. 16. 1 Cor. 15. 50.) he setteth down the similitude in these verses to this purpose, That a childe though he be heir and owner of all his fathers inheritance in hope, and as to right, yet so long as he is a *minor*, and under age, he differeth nothing from a servant in point of subjection, and as to free government and enjoyment of his rights and goods, ver. 1. and this because he himself is ruled, and his estate managed by tutors and curators; the continuance of which subjection, the Apostle sheweth is ordinarily limited unto the time prescribed by the father, longer than which the heir is not to remain in that state of subjection to his tutors, ver. 2. There are indeed other limits of childrens minority prefixed by the Law, besides the Will of the father; but he mentioneth this, because it only doth quadrate to the present purpose, for which the similitude is made use of.

From this usual custom among men, approved of here by the Spirit of God, being considered in it self, and without respect had to that spiritual purpose unto which it is applied afterwards. *Learn, 1.* So licentious is youth, where

where there is no restraint, and so foolish, as being destitute of experience, and more ruled by the inundation of impetuous passions than force of reason. That it is much conducing (both for a man's self, and for the publick good of the society among whom he liveth) he be first subjected unto others, and made to obey as a servant, (whereby in progresse of time he may attain some wisdom and experience) before he have absolute power to dispose of his own estate, and obtain dominion over others; otherwise it could not be so generally agreed unto by all parents, and in all nations: that *the heir as long as he is a childe should differ nothing from a servant*, which the Apostle speaketh of as an approven custom, and excepted against by none. 2. It is the duty of parents, as to provide a competent portion for their children whereupon they may live, when they themselves are dead and gone, so to do what in them lyeth to secure their portion for them; lest it be delapidated by their childrens folly, or any other way rendred uselesse unto them: for, unto this end are tutors and curators provided by the father unto the childe; *But he is under tutors and governors*. 3. Though parents are not to give unto their children just cause of irritation, *Col. 3. 21.* yet they ought not to please them to their hurt, but in some things must crosse their humour, to wit, especially when their so doing tendeth evidently to their childrens good: for, though the heir, even when he is a childe, would affect liberty, and absolute dominion over his own estate; yet the wise parent must keep him *under subjection to tutors and governors*. 4. It is no small mercy unto children when God doth prolong the life of parents untill they themselves attain to so much age and experience as may enable them to manage their own affairs; seeing otherwise their person and estate must come under the tuition, government, and reverence of others, who possibly may prove their unfriends: for, they must even be *under tutors and governors*. 5. Parents would labour to carry themselves with so much equity, wisdom and streightnesse in providing

viding a worldly portion for their children to live upon, as they do not disoblige those with whom they have commerce; that so they may with some measure of confidence commit the tuition of their children and means to the care and oversight of others, even those whom they shall be necessitated to appoint for *tutors and governors*. 6. It is the wisdom of parents to place no such trust of their children and means upon any, though otherwise never so much trust-worthy, but that they be limited in, and at a set time be obliged to give an account of their trust. Power and trust is a thing so dangerous, that if it be at the intrusted parties option, there are but few who willingly do part with it: Therefore, as for one reason, it is marked here, as a part of the fathers providence to prescribe a time, longer than which his childe is not to be under tutors and governors; *Until the time appointed by the father, saith he.*

Verf. 3. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.

HERE he applyeth the similitude, shewing the Church when she was in her infant-state under the Old Testament, was kept in bondage and subjection under that rigid and strict administration or outward policy which then was, and served for an *A B C*, or, a rough Rudiment, whereby the ancient Church was instructed, for the most part, by resemblances taken from earthly and wordly things. The first Doctrine which ariseth from his use-making of an earthly similitude to clear a spiritual Truth, is already marked, chap. 3. ver. 15. doct. 2. *Learn*, 2. The Church of God under the Old Testament, was in a state of nonage, and as an infant or childe, first, for quantity, as being contained in narrow bounds, once of one family, *Gen. 4. 3, 4.* and at most, but of one nation, *Psal. 147. 19, 20.* Secondly, in understanding; for although some persons were then endued with more excellent gifts of wisdom and knowledge, than any now, such

such as *Abraham, David, &c.* And though many, even under the New Testament, are but in understanding children and babes, *Heb. 5. 12.* yet (considering the more clear revelation of the Gospel, which now is, *2 Cor. 3. 18.*) we not only have an opportunity of attaining to much more knowledge now, than they had then, *Matt. 13. 7.* but also the generality of Christians are much more knowing of Gospel-mysteries than the body of the Jewish Church was, *Mat. 11. 11.* Yea, and those of them who excelled most in knowledge, did see but afar off, *Deut. 18. 18.* and through a cloud of many dark Ceremonies, *Heb. 9. 9.* which now are removed: for, speaking of the Jewish Church before Christ came, of which himself was one, he saith, *When we were children.* Doct. 3. The ancient Church was also in a state of bondage: not as if the Godly among them had not been heirs by Faith of the heavenly Inheritance, and partakers of the privilege of Adoption, (for so the similitude should not hold, which compareth the Church then to a childe who is heir, and by right, lord of all things) but, first, they were tyed to a number of ceremonial observances, or worldly rites and figures, which were a kind of bondage and slavery to the outward man, *Act. 15. 10.* Secondly, their inward man was under some degree of bondage also, in so far as by the rigid administration which then was, duties were with much strictness pressed, and covenanted influence for through-bearing in duty, and grace for pardoning their neglect of duty but sparingly revealed, *Job. 1. 17.* *We, when we were children, were in bondage,* saith he. Doct. 4. The multiplying of bodily significant rites in the matter of Worship, is a bringing of the Church unto a kind of bondage, and a reducing of her to a state of infancy and minority: for, therein did consist a great part of that bondage wherein the ancient Church was, even that they were under the elements of the world,

Verſ. 4. But when the fulneſſe of the time was come, God ſent forth His Son made of a woman, made under the Law,

5. To redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.

HE applyeth the ſimilitude yet further unto the Churches freedom from the fore-mentioned bondage, which he ſheweth was brought about at the time reſolved upon by God, as moſt fit for that buſineſſe; at which time, and in order to the purchaſe of this freedom, God ſent His own Son, the ſecond Perſon in the bleſſed Trinity, to the world, who was in a miraculous way incarnate, as being conceived in the womb of a virgin (*Iſa. 7. 14.*) without the company of any man, *Mat. 1. -18.* and being ſo incarnate, did ſubject Himſelf both to the precepts (*Mat. 3. 15.*) and curſe of the Law, *Philip. 2. 8.* This is, ver. 4. Whereby was brought about, firſt, the delivery and redemption of thoſe who were under the Law, to wit, of all the Elect, from the curſe of it (*chap. 3. 13.*) and of the whole Church in general from that rigor and ſervitude under which ſhe was as to her outward ſtate, *Eph. 2. 15.* for, except this be taken-in under the redemption ſpoken of, the Apoſtle's main ſcope (which is to put a difference betwixt the Church under the Old Teſtament, and the Church under the New, as to her bondage and freedom) ſhould not be touched; eſpecially ſeing Believers then, were redeemed from the curſe of the Law, as well as Believers now, *Habak. 2. -4.* And, ſecondly, hereby was procured our receiving or enjoying the Adoption of ſons, whereby is not meant only the benefit of Adoption in it ſelf. (for Believers under the Old Teſtament were the adopted children of God, *Jer. 31. -9.*) but alſo, and mainly a clearer manifeſtation of that privilege, and a more free uſe and fruition of it, whereby the Godly under the New Teſtament do not only attain to a clearer inſight in their Adoption, and the dignity following upon

L. 137

on it, *Rom. 8. 15.* but also to the actual enjoyment of their Inheritance in part, or of the graces of God's Spirit in a greater measure than the ancient Church did, *Jer. 31. 33, 34.* which is held forth as a consequence of our freedom from that rigorous discipline and government under which they were. 1.

From *Verf. 4. Learn, 1.* The time when God in His providence bestoweth a mercy upon His Church, or particular Believers in the Church, (*1 Pet. 5. 6.*) will, upon an exact survey of all circumstances, be found the full time, in so far as it is in the most considerable respects the fittest time for the bestowing of it, which holdeth also with the time wherein He afflicteth His People, *1 Pet. 1. 6.* He doth all things well, and in season, *Psal. 94. 18.* for, in place of saying Christ was sent unto the world at the time appointed of the Father, relative to that part of the similitude, which is, *ver. -2.* he saith, *When the fulnesse of time was come, God sent forth His Son;*

2. We are not to wonder, or curiously enquire, why Jesus Christ did come no sooner to the world, or why the Churches delivery from her external bondage was so long delayed, seeing all these things were so ordered of God, and did come to passe in the full and fit time; *When the fulnesse of time was come, God sent forth His Son.*

3. Jesus Christ had a being and subsistence before His incarnation, He was even from all eternity truly God, *Prov. 8. 23.* for, He is first *sent forth* before He *was made of a woman.*

4. The Father cannot but accept the obedience of Christ in name of those for whom it is offered, and who do lay hold upon it by Faith; seeing Christ did not come of Himself, but was sent by the Father to pay, in obedience to the Law, that He might redeem those that were under the Law: for, *God sent His Son,* to wit, not by dispatching Him from one place to another (for the Son being God, is present in all places, and can be absent from none) but by making Him appear invested with the humane nature, which before He was not. 5. Jesus Christ is Gods Son in a way proper to Himself alone

as being His only Son by nature, *Job. 1. 14.* the eternally begotten Son of the Father, *Psal. 2. 7.* and the expresse Image of the Father's Glory, *Heb. 1. 3.* for, it is of Him he speaketh, while he saith, *God sent His Son.* 6. It behoved our Mediator to be true man, God's unchangable justice so requiring, that the same nature which sinned should also suffer for sin: for, *He was made of a woman.* 7. Christ's humane nature was miraculously formed by the holy Ghost in the womb of a virgin without the company of any man; whence it followeth, that He was free from the guilt of *Adam's* first sin, and consequently of original sin, which descendeth from *Adam* unto all his posterity, who come of him by ordinary generation, *Gen. 5. 3.* but Christ did not so come of him; for, *He was made of a woman,* and not begotten by a man, *Mat. 1. 18.* 8. The body of Christ was not created in Heaven, and conveyed to the womb of the virgin, and from her to the world without taking of its substance from her, as water is conveyed through a conduit, but it was framed in the virgin and of her substance: for, *He was made of a woman.* 9. Though there be two natures in Christ, as being both God and man, yet He is but one person; for, the same Son who was sent by the Father is *made of a woman.* 10. By vertue of this personal union of the two natures in Christ, those things which are only verified in the one nature, are attributed unto, and spoken of the whole Person; for, to be made of a woman (which agreeth only to the humane nature) is ascribed to the Person of the Son; *God sent forth His Son, made of a woman.* 11. Jesus Christ being thus incarnate, was in respect of His humane nature, while in the state of humiliation, truly subjected to the Law, and accordingly conformed Himself unto it, whatsoever Law it was, whether general or moral, which all men are obliged unto, *Luke 2. 51.* or more special, positive, and ceremoniall, which the Jews and children of *Abraham* were bound to obey, *Mat. 3. 15.* or yet more particular of a Redeemer and Saviour, which He Himself only was obliged

liged unto, even to die for us, *Psalm. 40. 6, 7, 8.* for, saith the Apostle, *He was made under the Law.* 12. Though Christ as He was a creature, whose will cannot be the supream Law, was thus bound to subject Himself to the Law; yet it doth not follow hence, that therefore He did not fulfill the Law for us, but for Himself only, because this obligation did flow from His taking on the humane nature, which He did freely and for our good: for, upon His being made of a woman, He was also made under the Law; otherwayes He was free from the Law.

From *Verf. 5.* besides what is marked upon chap. 3. *ver. 13. Learn, 1.* Not only Christ's death and sufferings, which commonly go under the name of His passive obedience, but also His active obedience to the Law, in all those things, and those things only wherein we were obliged, is imputed unto us as our righteousness & price, whereby we are redeemed from the Law's curse: for He was made under the Law, that He might redeem them that were under the Law. So that the price of our Redemption and His subjection to the Law, are of equal extent. 2. As all men by nature are under the curse (*Eph. 2. 3.*) and irritating power of the Law (*Rom. 7. 5.*) and the Jewish Church were under that ancient rigid dispensation of the Law, binding them chiefly to the observation of many costly and burdensom ceremonies; (See *ver. 3.*) so no lesse was required in order to a Redemption, whether from the one or the other, than the incarnation of the Son of God, and His obedience (both by doing and suffering) to the whole Law of God: only with this difference, the Elect were redeemed under the Old Testament from the curse and irritating power of the Law, by vertue of Christ's obedience, while it was yet to be actually performed: for, though it be otherwise in natural causes, yet a moral cause, not present in being, but only supposed as future, may have its effect: but the Redemption of the Jewish Church from that rigid dispensation of the Law, was not effectuate before Christ was actually incarnate, and did give real obedience

ence to the Law, God having so ordered that those legal shadows should not evanish until Christ the substance of them did come: for, it is with relation to this, as a main part of his present scope, that the Apostle saith, *God sent forth His Son, to redeem them that were under the Law.* 3. The outward administration of the Covenant of Grace under the Old Testament, had some influence upon the ancient Church, even as to the inward state of particular Believers, in so far that though the Godly then did partake of the same spiritual blessings whereof we partake now; yea, and some particular persons were endued with greater gifts of the Spirit than many now are; Yet greater plenty and abundance of Grace is bestowed upon the Church in the time of the Gospel, if we respect the body of the Church and Faithfull in general, than was bestowed before Christ came: for, the Apostle putting a difference betwixt those two times, speaketh of *receiving the adoption of sons*, as a thing proper to the dayes of the Gospel; not as if the Spirit of Adoption had been altogether withholden from the ancient Church, but because it was then tempered with the spirit of servitude, the way to Heaven not as yet clearly manifested, *Heb. 9. 8.* and is now bestowed in a more ample, clear and plentiful measure; for, it is not unusual in Scripture that this should be affirmed of one, and as it were tacitly denied of another, which is more illustrious in one than in another, though it be common to both, *Mat. 13. 24.* according to which rule the following sixth verse must be expounded.

Verf. 6. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

HE giveth an evidence of their having received the adoption of sons in a more clear and plentiful measure under the New Testament, to wit, God's sending forth the holy Spirit, the third Person in the blessed Trinity, and making Him manifest His presence by His special

special and supernatural gifts in the hearts of Believers; whereby they were enabled like little children to own and incall upon God as their Father; and this without any distinction of *Jew* or *Gentile*, which seemeth to be hinted at by the two epithets given to God, both signifying the same thing; the one *Abba*, a Syriack word, which language was then commonly spoken among the Jews, the other a Greek word, rendred *Father*, which was most commonly used among the Gentiles: Now this of God's sending forth His Spirit under the New Testament, is not to be so understood, as if He had not been sent forth into the hearts of Believers under the Old Testament, but that He is now poured-out in a greater measure, *Joel* 2. 28. *Doct.* 1. There are three Persons in the blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, all spoken of here; *God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son.* 2. The Spirit here spoken of, is not a naked quality, or operation and work only, but a person subsisting of Himself, as appeareth from this, that He is said to be sent forth, which agreeth only to persons; *God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son.* 3. He is a divine Person, and no meer creature; for He dwelleth in the hearts of all Believers, which can be said of no person but God; *God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts.* 4. The holy Spirit proceedeth both from the Father and the Son; for, He is sent by the Father, and is the Spirit of His Son; and is so called here, because the Apostle is to evidence their sonship by the operation of this Spirit; which sonship of theirs, is grounded upon Christ, *Rom.* 8. 17. *Doct.* 5. Whoever have this high dignity of Adoption conferred upon them, must also have the Spirit of God given to reside, not in their brain only, to fill them with the gifts of knowledge, as He may be in Hypocrites, *Mat.* 7. 22. but in their hearts also, by making a gracious change there, *Eph.* 4. 23. to be diffused from thence, as from the first principle of life, (*Prov.* 4. 23.) through all the faculties of the soul, and members of the body, *1 Thess.* 5. 23. for, saith he, *Because ye are sons, He*

bath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts. 6. According as Beleivers do attain to a larger insight in this excellent benefit of Adoption, and a greater measure of the fruits of it, there will be a proportionable measure of the Spirit's in-dwelling and manifesting of Himself in His gracious operations, especially in His assisting and furnishing for the duty of Prayer: for, he proveth they had received a clear insight in this priviledge of Adoption, and the more free use and fruition of it, because the Spirit was more plentifully bestowed to dwell in their hearts; *And because ye are sons, saith he, God hath sent forth, &c.* 7. Though the exercise of Faith, Love, Hope and other graces in the duty of Prayer, and at other occasions, doth flow from the renewed soul, as the proper inward and vital cause of those actions, so that properly we, and not the Spirit of God, are said to believe, repent, pray, &c. *Rom. 10. 10.* Yet, because the Spirit doth not only create, and preserve those gracious habits in the soul, (*Ezek. 36. 26.*) but also exciteth the soul to act, and assisteth it in acting according to them, *Philip. 2. 13.* without which actuating, exciting and assisting grace, habitual grace in us could do nothing, *Job. 15. 5.* Therefore is it, that the exercise of those graces is ascribed to the Spirit of God, as the external efficient cause thereof; for which reason, our affectionate and believing Prayers are ascribed here unto Him; *God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son, crying, Abba.* 8. There is an holy vehemency and fervor required in Prayer, opposite to carelesse formality, and deadnesse: for, praying is here called *crying*, which is an usual evidence of fervency and earnestnesse; and the doubling of the word *Father*, maketh for the same purpose; *Crying, Abba, Father, or, Father, Father.* 9. This holy vehemency and fervor consisteth not so much in the lifting up of the externall voice, as in the inward bensal and serious frame of the spirit; it is a cry, not of the mouth, but of the heart; *Into your hearts, crying.* 10. Besides this fervency and earnestnesse requisit in Prayer, there would be also a
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confident familiar owning of God, joyned with reverence to Him as a Father: for, the Spirit maketh them to call upon Him by the name of *Abba, Father*.

Verf. 7. *Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.*

HERE he concludeth from what is said, first, That under the New Testament we are no more servants, as being redeemed from that legal yoke of bondage, under which the ancient Church was; And, secondly, That we are sons, and by consequence heirs of God, which is verified mainly in real Believers under the New Testament, in so far as they are sons come to age, and heirs past tutory, actually partaking of their father's inheritance in a larger measure than Believers did under the Old Testament, as was explained, ver. 5. All which priviledges are bestowed upon us through Christ, and through vertue of His coming unto the flesh. *Doct. 1.* It is a safe way of reasoning upon the observation of the saving effects of God's Spirit in our selves, to conclude that we are in a state of grace, even the adopted Children of God: for, the Spirit of God by the Apostle doth so reason in this place, *Because He hath sent forth His Spirit into your hearts: wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son.* 2. The rare priviledges which are bestowed upon Believers, chiefly under the New Testament, as they do exceed in some degrees those, which the generality of Believers enjoyed under the Old; so they are many, and all of them so linked together, as in one golden chain, that where one of them is, the rest are also: and it is our duty, having attained to know our enjoying of any one of them, thence to gather that we have all the rest: for, the Apostle reckoneth a number of such priviledges, which, as to the degree wherein they are bestowed, are proper to the dayes of the Gospel, and doth alwayes from the former infer the latter; *Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of*

God. 3. Though the natural Son of God be only one, even Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father, *Job. 1. 14.* yet every man who hath the Spirit of God dwelling in his heart, is His son by grace and adoption, even they who by nature are children of wrath, *Eph. 2. 3.* for, from God's sending forth His Spirit into their hearts, he concludeth, *Wherefore thou art a son.* 4. Our right to the heavenly inheritance, as also the possession of it, whether that which is begun here in the Kingdom of Grace, or, which shall be compleated hereafter in the Kingdom of Glory, doth follow upon our sonship and adoption; so that God, of rebels doth first make up sons, and then none can challenge Him of injustice for bestowing upon us the inheritance of children; *And if a son, then an heir of God,* saith he. 5. As none since the fall ever was, or shall be lifted up to that high dignity of being sons and daughters to the Lord Almighty, or could lay any just claim to Heaven and Glory as his inheritance, but by vertue of Christ's obedience and death, whereby all those high and precious priviledges, being formerly forfeited and lost, were again recovered: So, the actual exhibition of Christ in the flesh, and the real payment of the price by Christ, did bring with it (God having so appointed) a larger measure and higher degree of those priviledges to be bestowed upon Believers after that time, than was ordinarily enjoyed by Believers formerly: for, he is speaking here mainly of that higher degree of freedom, and of that more evident and clear sight of, and right to the inheritance, together with the fuller measure of its possession in the Graces of God's Spirit, which is proper to the dayes of the Gospel; and sheweth all this cometh *through Christ*, to wit, His actual incarnation, obedience and death.

Verſ. 8. *Howbeit, then when ye knew not God, ye did ſervice unto them which by nature are no gods.*

9. *But now after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggerly elements, whereunto ye deſire again to be in bondage?*

THe Apoſtle (having now ſufficiently confirmed by Scripture and Reason, the Church's freedom from that ancient legal diſpenſation, and more eſpecially from the Ceremonial Law) doth now, in the ſecond part of the chapter, labour upon their affections, to work them up towards the imbracing of this Truth, both by ſharp reproofs, and moſt affectionate inſinuations.

And firſt, that he may faſten a reproof upon them for their begun defection the more convincingly, he ſheweth, when that legal diſpenſation was in force, they, to wit, the Galatians who were of the Gentiles, were ignorant of the true God, and worſhipped for gods thoſe things *which by nature* and really were *no gods*, but in opinion only; and conſequently they were not born or brought up under the pedagogy of the Law, as the Jews were, who therefore might pretend ſome excuſe for their unwillingneſſe to depart from it, which thoſe Galatians could not, ver. 8. And ſecondly, that he may make their defection yet more inexcusable, and convince them of great ingratitude to God in it, he mentioneth the happy condition which they were brought unto before they made this defection, to wit, they had attained to the knowledge of God in Chriſt, and this not by any induſtry of their own, *Rom. 9. 16.* or for any merit or worth in them, *Deut. 7. 7.* but were herein prevented by mercy in God, who had firſt known them, having from all eternity elected (*Eph. 1. 4*) and in time effectually called them to the knowledge of Himſelf, *Gal. 1. 15, 16.* Thirdly, from thoſe grounds he doth with a kind of admiration at their ingratitude and folly, fall upon them

with a sad reproof for their turning again, and desiring to be in bondage, and under subjection to the observati-
on of those Mosaical Elements, or Ceremonies, (See
ver. 3.) which he calleth *weak*, as having never had
any power in themselves to produce any spiritual effect,
Heb. 9. 9. and now under the Gospel have not so much
as any figurative or sacramental use, which formerly
they had, as being shadows of Christ to come, *Col. 2. 17.*
he calleth them also *beggerly* and poor, as not being able
to afford any solid consolation unto those who observed
them: now the Apostle calleth their defection a *turning*
again, and *desiring to be again in bondage*; not as if they
had been ever under that yoke formerly (for, this were
contrary to ver. 8.) but it was a going backward from
that measure, towards which they had already advanced;
and the word *again*, relateth to their act of turning, and
desire of bondage, for they had been under bondage
formerly, to wit, unto Idolatry, from which they were
converted: But it doth not relate to the weak and beg-
gerly elements under which they never had been, ver. 9.

From Verf. 8. *Learn, 1.* However Nature's light doth
serve to make us know there is a God, and that He ought
to be served, *Rom. 1. 19.* yet all the knowledge of God
th ereby attained, is nothing else but ignorance, in so far
as it leaveth us destitute of the knowledge of God in
Christ, without which there is no salvation, *Act. 4. 12.*
for, in this respect, these Galatians are said to have been
ignorant of God, while they lived in gentilism, although
even then they had some knowledge of God, as other
Gentiles had, *Rom. 1. 19.* *Howbeit, then when ye knew not*
God. 2. When people are destitute of that knowledge
of God which the written Word affordeth, or though
they have it, yet will not follow it, but give themselves
up to be guided by those notions of a Deity with which
the light of Nature doth furnish them, they cannot but
miscarry far in their apprehensions of God, and in the
nature of that worship which is due unto Him: for, the
Galatians, following this guide, did worship plurality
of

of false gods, when they ought to have satisfied themselves with that one only true God, *Mat. 4. 10. Ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.* 3. Men are naturally inclined to feign some representation of the Godhead unto themselves by things which incur in the outward senses, whether Sun, Moon, Stars, Gold, Silver, Wood, or Stone, that hereby at first they may be only kept in remembrance of God, *Exod. 32. 1.* from which they do easily advance further to give divine worship unto those images and representations, and so do service unto those who by nature are no gods, as these Galatians did. 4. There is not any kind of religious worship or service, under any name whatsoever, to be given unto any creature, but to God only, as the giver of it would not commit idolatry : for here, the doing of service unto those who by nature are no gods, is condemned, and it is the same worship and service, as is clear to any who understand the first language, which the Papists affirm may be given to Saints and Angels. 5. It is not unprofitable, but very necessary sometimes for converted Christians, to be put in remembrance of that sinfull and miserable case wherein they were before conversion ; and this, as for other reasons, so, that hereby they may be made to prize, highly esteem, and be thankfull to that free-grace which shewed pity on them : for, so the Apostle mindeth them of the time when they *knew not God.* 6. The moe of outward engagements unto a sin or error by education, or former instruction, are lying upon a people or person, they are in some sense the more excusable, and, at least, to be pitied, *Act. 17. 30.* and the fewer engagements there be of that kind, they are the more inexcusable, and the lesse to be pitied : for, he aggregeth the sin of those Galatians in hankering after the Jewish Ceremonies, from this, that *then*, or in the time of the Churches minority (spoken of, ver. 3.) they were not under that yoke, and so not engaged by education and former instruction to adhere unto them, as the Jews were ; *Not knowing God, they served them which by nature were no gods.*

From Vers. 9. *Learn*, 1. Such are the riches of mercy in God, that He doth sometimes convert and save the most debauched and gracelesse sinners; and therefore we are not to despair even of such: for, these Galatians, who did once serve idols, were afterwards made to *know God*, as the word signifieth, *and were known of God*. 2. People would labour to inform themselves in the knowledge of God according to the written Word, as they would remove an otherwise invincible bar standing in the way of their conversion; for, God can neither be served, obeyed or trusted upon, except He be known: Hence the converted state of these Galatians, is set forth by their knowing of God; *But now after ye have known God*. 3. Then is God known aright and savingly, when He is known in Jesus Christ, according as He is held forth in the Gospel, without whom, God is a consuming fire, and in and through whom, He is well pleased, *Mat. 3. 17.* for then, and not while then, are the Galatians said to know God, when they knew Him in Christ revealed in the Gospel; *But now after ye have known God*. 4. So tender ought we to be of God's honour in the work of man's conversion, as that we maintain or affirm nothing which may, though but seemingly, ascribe the praise of that work, either in whole, or in part, to man's own free-will, industry and pains, or withdraw any part of it from the alone efficiency of Gods powerful and free grace, who worketh in us both to will and to do, *Philip. 2. 13.* Hence the Apostle, having spoken of their knowing God at their conversion, which might seem to attribute somewhat to themselves, he addeth by way of correction, *or rather are known of God*, ascribing thus the whole work of their conversion to God's preventing grace. 5. Sinners in an unconverted state, are such of whom God taketh no notice or knowledge, to wit, so, as to be familiar with them, or to communicate special and saving blessings upon them; as also the contrary is implied to be the priviledge of true Converts, while he saith those Galatians, now converted, were known of God,

God, which implyeth, that before conversion they were not known of Him in the sense here meant : *Or rather are known of God.* 6. The more of mercy hath been received by a people or person, and particularly the greater measure of knowledge they have attained unto, their after declining is capable of the more sad and weighty aggravations, but chiefly the scandalous failings of the truly Regenerate, are extremely heinous : for, he mentioneth their *knowing God*, and *being known of God*, hereby to aggrege their apostasie and defection. 7. Holy zeal will teach a man to speak with so much contempt, as reason will afford him warrant for, of any thing which is so pleaded for, as to inroach upon the honour due to Christ, or upon any of His Offices, whatever respect hath been due, or yet is, to that thing otherwise : for, though the Levitical Ceremonies were once to be religiously observed, as a part of divine Worship leading to Christ, chap. 3. 24. and though they were even at this time, when the Apostle wrote, to be held, and were held in some esteem, the free use of them being permitted to the weak Jews untill they should have an honourable buriall, *Rom. 14. 3, &c.* and this justly, because they were once a divine Ordinance ; yet when the false Apostles did urge them upon the Gentiles, whether as a part of necessary commanded Worship, thereby inroaching upon Christ's royal and legislative Power, and tying the conscience where He left it free, or as a part of their righteousness before God, inroaching thereby upon Christ's Priestly Office, whose obedience and suffering is our only ransom and righteousness, *Eph. 5. 2.* the Apostle is bold to give them the name of *weak and beggerly rudiments*. 8. People may advance very far in the way of Christianity, and yet make a foul retreat afterwards in the course of defection and apostasie ; which contributeth nothing to that foul error of the total and final apostasie of the Saints, (See chap. 1. ver. 6. doct. 6.) for, these Galatians, after they were known of God, *turned again to the weak and beggerly elements.* 9. Though

Apo-

Apostates and authors of defection pretend to never so much of reason to justify their apostasie and declining, *Rom.* 3. 31. and 6. 1. Yet, upon an exact survey, all their reasons will appear to be meer pretences, and their practice so absurd and irrational, that men of composed spirits, and not demented as they are, cannot but wonder at it: for, the Apostle falleth upon their defection, not without admiration at their absurdity and folly, *How turn ye again to the weak and beggerly elements?* saith he. 10. As defection and apostasie is a voluntary sin, and usually floweth from an itching desire after new-fangled Errors, arising from a kind of loathing at old Truths, *2 Tim.* 4. 3. so, the more a man is carried with the full bent of affection and desire towards a sin, he is the more guilty before God; for, their sin is aggregated from this, that they *desired again to be in bondage*: the word rendred *desired*, signifieth to will a thing earnestly and with great desire.

Verf. 10. *Ye observe dayes, and moneths, and times, and years;*

HE giveth an instance or example of those elements, unto which they had turned, to wit, their observing such distinctions of times for sacred use, as were observed by the Jewish Church, according to God's direction by *Moses*; and he giveth instance of a fourfold distinction of times, first, in *Dayes*, such were their Sabbaths, and new-moons, *Numb.* 28. 9, 11. Secondly, *Moneths*, to wit, the first (*Numb.* 28. 16.) and the seventh, *Numb.* 29. 1, &c. Thirdly, *Times* or seasons, whereby are meant their anniversary feasts, as the Passe-over, *Exod.* 12. 3, &c. Pentecost, *Lev.* 23. 16. and feast of Tabernacles, *Lev.* 23. 24. Fourthly, *Years*, to wit, every seventh year of release, *Lev.* 25. 2. and the fiftieth year of Jubile, *Lev.* 25. 8. *Doct.* 1. A Minister is not to insist upon the reproof of sin in general, but would wisely condescend upon some particular instances of those sins whereof the party reprov'd is guilty: for, hereby reproofs are more convincing, piercing

cing, and not so easily slighted, or forgotten as otherwise: thus the Apostle giveth an instance of the sin formerly reprov'd, in their *observing dayes, and moneths, and times, and years.* 2. Though the placing of some difference among dayes and times be lawfull, as the keeping one day of seven holy to the Lord above the rest, according to the fourth Command, and the setting apart of some times and seasons for certain civil uses, as sowing, reaping, keeping Fairs and Markets, *Gen. 8. 22.* as also the occasional sanctifying of some dayes when God calleth us to it, for the work of humiliation, or thanksgiving, *Mark 2. 20.* Yet all superstitious observation of dayes (See upon *Col. 2. 16. Doct. 5.*) is unlawfull, as being here condemn'd either expressly or by consequence; *Ye observe dayes, and moneths, &c.*

Verf. 11. *I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.*

HE concludeth the former reproof, and maketh it nervous and peircing, by shewing their desertion was such, as if continued in, would render all the great pains and labour, which he, as a Minister of Christ, did undergo amongst them, to be for no purpose and in vain, as to any good which they should reap by them; in a word, it would condemn them: and to make his reproof the more taking, he doth sweeten it somewhat, while he expresth their hazard, not as one unconcerned, and caring nothing for it, but as a tender father forecasting, and fearing what may hurt his dearest childe. *Doct. 1.* The Office of the Ministry, being faithfully gone about, will not be found a life of ease, but hath so much of toil, labour, fainting and wearinesse going alongs with it, as any other imployment whatsoever: for, Paul expresth the conscientious discharging of his Ministry by a word, signifying not simply to *labour*, but to labour painfully, with much travel, toyl, strife, and earnestnesse. even untill fainting and wearinesse; *Lest I have bestowed upon you labour*, saith he. 2. A Minister ought not to satisfie him-

himself in this, that he hath done his duty, without further care what fruit his labours have upon the people ; but he must also be no lesse anxious and solicitous about the successe of, and the peoples profiting by his pains, than he was concerning his own through-bearing in the exercise of his Calling before the People ; for, *Paul did fear lest he had bestowed his labour in vain upon them.*

3. The most lively Preachers and painfull Ministers, will sometimes see so little fruit of their labours, and so much iniquity among the People of their charge, as may furnish them with just grounds to professe their fears, that few or none are saved by their Ministry : for, even *Paul doth fear lest he had laboured in vain among those Galatians.* 4. A faithfull Minister is not to sit down discouraged, and quit his station upon his observation of little or no fruit of his labours amongst the People, but must hold on in his duty notwithstanding, as knowing his labour will not be lost as to himself and from the Lord, *Isa. 49. 4.* for, *Paul* ceaseth not to warn, reprove and instruct these Galatians, although he feared lest he had laboured in vain among them. 5. It is hardly conceivable how men can live and die, maintaining both in opinion and practice the doctrine of justification either in whole, or in part, by their own works done in obedience to the Law, and yet be saved : for, *Paul* conceiveth his labour should be in vain among those Galatians, and consequently that they would be damned, if they did continue in that error chiefly, whereby they joyned the works of the Ceremonial Law with Christ in the point of justification.

Vers. 12. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am ; for I am as ye are, ye have not injured me at all.

THe Apostle, knowing that these Galatians were alienated in their affections from him, and fearing lest from his present severity and sharpnesse towards them, they should apprehend that he was alienated from them also, Therefore he setteth himself to cure both the certain

certain evil, and feared mistake ; and this by requesting them, as Brethren, that they would keep intimate affection towards him as to another self, or as if he had been themselves ; for, so much doth the expression (*be as I*) bear ; and assureth them that he was so affected towards them, even the same which he formerly was, and that his present severity did not flow from hatred, or a spirit of private revenge against them, seeing they had never done any personal injury to him, to wit, but in so far as they had wronged Christ and Truth ; and therefore leaveth it unto them to look upon him, as a man who was pleading the cause of Christ, and not venting any private grudge of his own. *Dott. 1.* Though the Servant of Jesus Christ must use severity in the way of reproof and rebuke towards those who are gone astray ; yet, because people are apt to conceive, that his so doing doth flow from an imbittered spirit, and so to slight both him and his rebukes, (*2 Chron. 18. 7.*) therefore he would in wisdom sometimes mix his severity with gentleness, and his rebukes with exhortations and intreaties, as looking not so much upon what their sin deserveth, as what is most convenient for gaining them to repentance : Hence the Apostle, having sufficiently rebuked them, cometh now to request and intreat ; *Brethren, I beseech you*, saith he. * *2.* As Error above any other sin, doth estrange the person erring from any who oppose them in their way, though they were even their most faithfull Pastors : So it is the duty of Ministers not to be careless whether they have the affection of such or not, upon pretence that no cause of disrespect is given by them ; but they are to follow on upon their erring people, and beg their favour and affection, if it cannot be otherwayes gained ; and this mainly for the people's profit, and that hereby they may be put in a capacity to do them good : for, *Paul*, apprehending that these erring Galatians were estranged from him in their affections, he beggeth their favour, while he saith, *I beseech you, be as I am.* *3.* The mutual love and affection betwixt a People and a Pastor, ought

to be so intimate, as if they both were but one person, every one minding the good of another, as of themselves, constructing aright of the actions of another, as they would have others construct of their own, and rejoycing at the advantage, and grieving for the hurt of one another, as if it were their own; and this because Satan doth by all means labour to drive in some wedge of jealousie to rent them asunder, that so the Minister may be uselesse unto the People, and they a heart-break unto him: this intimacy of affection, is here intreated-for by *Paul* from the Galatians, *Be as I am*; and was made conscience of by him towards them, *for I am as ye are*, saith he. 4. It is no small part of that divine wisdom required in a Minister, so to hate, and testifie against the sins of People, as not to relent in his respect to their persons; so to persecute their ill, as to remain tenderly affectionated towards their good: for, thus did *Paul*; *I am as ye are*, saith he. 5. As People are apt to apprehend that the zeal of a Minister against their sin, doth flow from a spirit of revenge and spight against their persons for some real or apprehended injury done unto him by them: So it is most base and sinfull for a Minister to intend and sharpen his zeal, even though against sin, from any consideration of that kind; and a thing, the very groundlesse suspicions whereof, he would labour to wipe off: for so doth *Paul* here, by shewing they had done him no wrong; and therefore it could not be in reason supposed, that in his sharp rebukes he was venting his spleen, or a spirit of private revenge; *Ye have not injured me at all*, saith he.

Verf. 13. *Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the Gospel unto you at the first.*

14. *And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.*

15. *Where is then the blessednesse you spake of? for I bear you*

you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

THe Apostle insisteth to clear that he was not changed in his affection towards them; and withall, by shewing how affectionate they were once to him for the Truth's sake which he did preach, he pointeth at their great inconstancy, if so he may, even by setting forth their deserved praises, make them ashamed of their present estrangedness unto him, and put on the same affection towards him and to Truth, which once they had, according to his proposed scope, v. 12. In order to which, he declareth they were so far from doing him any personal injury, for which they might apprehend him to bear them at hatred, that upon the contrary, they had shown much love and reverence unto him; which he cleareth, 1. by bringing to their remembrance, how that when he came to preach the Gospel first unto them, while they were yet in paganism, he did preach *through much infirmity of the flesh*; whereby is meant, not only his humble way of deportment in his whole Ministry without the shew of humane wisdom and authority, (as *weaknesse or infirmity* is taken, 1 Cor. 2. ver. 3. compared with ver. 1.) but also and mainly those many sufferings he did undergo from the enemies of the Gospel among them, which *Paul* calleth elsewhere his infirmities, 2 Cor. 12. 10. and they are called *of the flesh*, because his *flesh*, or outward man, was most afflicted by them, the spirit, or inward man, being underpropped by God, 2 Cor. 4. 16. This is contained, ver. 13. Which sufferings are described from the end which God proposed to Himself in them, which was *Paul's* *tentation*, or trial, to wit, of his faith, patience, constancy, and other graces. 2. By acknowledging with thankfulness their respective carriage towards him all that time; particularly, they did not despise his sufferings, as taking no notice of them, neither did they reject him, or his Ministry, because of his sufferings; but did receive him, and the Truth delivered by him,

him, though an afflicted persecuted man, with as much reverence and obedience, as if it had been preached by an Angel, or by Christ Himself in His own Person: this is all he meaneth by their *receiving him as Christ Jesus*; for, if they had given him the honour due unto Christ in other respects, he would not have made mention of it without detestation, (See *Act. 14. 14.*) This is ver. 14. And 3. having, as it were in a parenthesis, mentioned how happy a people they then were, even by their own grant, and this with a kind of exclamation (for the words do read *How great, or, of what sort was the blessedness? &c.*) he cleareth their respect to him yet further, by testifying it was not counterfeited and in words only, but real, and so fervent, that they were ready to have bestowed any thing upon him which possibly they could, and might tend to his advantage and encouragement in the work of the Gospel, even their very eyes not being excepted, if so it had been possible, that they being plucked out, could have been usefull unto him. This is contained, ver. 15.

From Ver. 13. *Learn, 1.* It seemeth good unto God to commit the heavenly treasure of the Gospel unto earthen vessels, and to exercise those whom He employeth to preach the Gospel, what, with the sense of their own infirmities from within, what, with heavie trouble from without; that so, while nothing appeareth in them to outward appearance, but what is subject to reproach and contempt, we may ascribe the glory of any good which is done by them, not to men, but to God, *2 Cor. 4. 7.* for, this is the ordinary lot of other Preachers, which Paul sheweth here was his, even that *through infirmity of the flesh he preached* unto them. 2. When the Gospel cometh first into a place, then especially doth Satan stir up all his malice, and all that interest which he hath in wicked men, for creating trouble unto those whom God employeth in the preaching of it; if so he may give the Gospel a dash, at its very first entry: thus *Paul preached the Gospel at first through infirmity of the flesh*; whereby

is meant mainly, if not only, those hard sufferings which he did meet with, as appeareth from the name of *tentation*, or trial, which he giveth to this infirmity, ver. 14. *Doct. 3.* It is the duty of called Ministers to go on with courage in the Work of the Lord, notwithstanding of any discouragement of that kind, receiving manfully the first onset chiefly of Satan's fury, as knowing their ceding to him will make him more cruel, and their resisting of him will make him flee from them, *Jam. 4. - 7.* for, *Paul, even through infirmity of the flesh, preached to them at first.* 4. Whoever do thus set their face against the fury of persecuters, it shall be no grief of heart, but matter of joy unto them afterwards, to call to minde what hardships they have been made to undergo of that sort, as finding the Truth preached by them to have been thereby confirmed, and their own fidelity in their Calling, and to the good of souls, manifested, and the power of God made known, by making His Truth spread the further, the more it was opposed: for, *Paul* calleth to mind his sufferings, when he preached the Gospel, as not being ashamed of them, because thereby all the advantages presently named were attained; *Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the Gospel.*

From Ver. 14. *Learn, 1.* God's design in measuring out an hard lot and great opposition to those who are engaged in the work of the Ministry, is not to discourage, but to try them, by making His grace in them shine the more clearly, the more they are put to exercise it under their hardships and straits: for, *Paul* calleth his *infirmity* or sufferings, his *tentation* or trial (See *Jam. 1. - 2, Luke 8. - 13. and 22. 28.*) and my *tentation* which was in my *flesh.* 2. As it is too ordinary for those who are at ease, to contemn, neglect, and be carelesse of the heavey afflictions and sufferings of others, chiefly of the Ministers of Jesus Christ, as if they were wholly unconcerned in what they suffer: So it speaketh much to the commendation of a People, when they lay to heart, and take notice of the sufferings of their faithfull Ministers,

as if they were their own, and do sympathize with them under all their hardships : for, he commendeth the Galatians from this, that *they despised not his temptation, or trial and affliction* ; the word signifieth, they did not set it at nought, as not worthy to be taken notice of, and so they have been duely affected with it. 3. So little love have men naturally to the Gospel, that they are ready to take occasion from any thing, to make them cast at it : even the necessary trials and afflictions, with which God seeth fit to exercise the Preachers of the Gospel, are sufficient ground for many to reject both the persons and doctrine of Ministers : for, *Paul*, commending these Galatians for their not rejecting of him, because of his infirmities, sheweth the contrary sin to be very ordinary ; *Nor rejected, but received me*, saith he. 4. It is high matter of commendation unto a people, when the outwardly base and contemptible condition of Ministers doth not diminish any thing of that due respect which they owe to the Message which they carry : for, these Galatians are commended from this, that notwithstanding of his *temptation, they rejected not, but received him as an Angel of God*. 5. The faithfull Ministers of Jesus Christ, are to be held in high estimation for their works sake ; so that as (all due respect being given unto their persons, *1 Tim. 5. 17.*) the doctrine of Truth preached by them may be received with as much faith and reverence, as if an Angel from Heaven, or Christ Himself were the Preacher of it ; for, they are Ambassadors in Christ's place, *2 Cor. 5. 20.* and the Word of God is alwayes truth and worthy to be received, whoever do preach it, neither doth it borrow any intrinick authority from the person of the Preacher : Hence the Galatians are commended, that in this respect they *received Paul as an Angel of God, even as Christ Jesus*. See *Luke 10. 16.*

From Vers. 15. *Learn, 1.* The onely thing which maketh a people happy, is to have the doctrine of the Gospel (which is the mean of our reconciliation with God in Christ, *2 Cor. 5. 18.*) preached among them, and

to receive this Doctrine, and the faithfull Preachers of it, with all due reverence, love and subjection. The enjoying of honour, riches, and abundance of outward peace, is no blessednesse, being compared with this, *Psal. 4. 6. 7.* for, the Apostle speaketh of these Galatians while they were in that case, *What, or, how great was then your blessednesse?* 2. Injuries received afterwards will not obliterate the inward sense, or mar the outward acknowledgment of favours formerly received in a thankfull mind: for, though the Galatians had done no private injury to *Paul*, ver. --12. yet, in their defection from Truth, they had wronged him for the Truth's sake, and notwithstanding he proclaimeth those evidences of their love and respect, which he had received formerly both in the former verse, and more expressly here, while he saith, *I bear you record, ye would have plucked out your eyes, &c.*

3. The love and reverence which People owe to Ministers, ought not to be verbal, and in profession only, but real also, even such as may evidence it self in the hearty bestowing of any thing which may be for their encouragement, or for advancing the Work of God in their hands: for, *Paul* proveth these Galatians had received him as they ought, from their readinesse to impart unto him all things necessary and possible for his encouragement; *Ye received me*, saith he, *for I bear you record, ye would have plucked out your eyes.* 4. Though, as is usually said, Charity begins at home, and we be commanded to love our neighbour only as our self, *Mat. 22. 39.* Yet there is a certain case, in which we must consider our neighbour, not only as a neighbour, but as a special instrument of God, and thus we are in some respects to love and prefer him unto our selves; and especially when he is an instrument imployed by God for the defence and propagation of the Gospel, we ought to be ready to forsake the dearest things we have in the world, though it were our own hands, eyes, feet; yea, and our very life, if so it may promote the Work of God in his hands: for, in this case, it is not our neighbour, but Christ and the Go-

spel which we prefer unto our selves, according to *Mat. 16. 37.* Hence, because *Paul* was such an instrument, the *Galatians* are commended for their readinesse to pluck out their own eyes, and to give them to him. 5. The wisdom and goodnesse of God hath so provided, that the hands, eyes, and other members of our body, being cut off, or plucked out, cannot be serviceable, or usefull unto the body of any other, hereby preventing the cruelty and tyranny of the greater sort, who would make no scruple to mutilate the bodies of their inferiours, if those mutilated members could serve for any use to themselves afterwards; for, saith he, *If it had been possible, they would have plucked out their own eyes*, importing, it was impossible, not simply to pluck them out, but that their eyes, being plucked out, could serve for the same use to him for which they did serve unto themselves.

Verf. 16. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

THE Apostle concludeth from what he hath said of their former kindnesse to him, that he was not now turned their enemy, nor estranged in his affection from them, (for, the interrogative hath the force of a vehement denial) and that they had no reason to think so of him, this only excepted, that with much candor and ingenuity he had declared the Truth unto them, in opposition to the Errors of the false Apostles; the absurdity of which reason, is also imported by the interrogative propounded to them. *Doct. 1.* For Christians to entertain malice, or a spirit of private revenge one against another, as it is in any case sinfull; so when there hath been no personal injury offered, it is abominable; and hardly can it be conceived, that a man of conscience will be guilty of it: for, *Paul*, having declared that they had done him no injury, but shown much love and reverence unto him, denyeth that there was any just reason, why they could so much as conceive that he was turned an enemy

enemy unto them ; *Am I therefore become your enemy ?*
 2. When men are once engaged in a sinfull course, and especially in the way of error, they are so dementate with it, that they can put no difference betwixt it and themselves ; they have common friends and enemies ; and whosoever is an enemy to it, is looked upon by them as an enemy to themselves : for, *Paul*, by telling the Truth in opposition to their Error, is looked upon as an enemy ; *Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the Truth ?*
 3. However a faithfull Minister will readily be mistaken for his freedom and ingenuity in the reproof of sin, as if he were an unfriend and enemy to the person reprov'd (when really he can give no such evident proof of his love and respect, *Psalm* 141. 5.) he is neverthelesse to go on in his duty, labouring to obviate all such mistakes and prejudices, as he best may ; for, *Paul* ceaseth not to tell them the Truth, although he was looked upon as an enemy for his so doing, only he labourerth to clear them of their mistake ; *Am I therefore become your enemy, &c.*

Verf. 17. They zealously affect you, but not well : yea, they would exclude you, that you might affect them.

18. *But it is good to be zealously affected alwayes in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.*

THE Apostle, in further prosecution of the former purpose, obviateth an objection, arising from that fervent zeal, or that intense love joyned with serious endeavours to oppose, and a kind of indignation against any thing that might prove hurtfull unto them, which the false Apostles seemed to carry towards them, beyond what *Paul* did ; so that yet they had reason to doubt of his affection to them. The Apostle answereth, It was true indeed that the false Apostles pretended great love to, and zeal for them, but their zeal was not of the right stamp, as not having that which is truly good for its object, to wit, the edification of those for whom they

seemed zealous, but rather their destruction, while all their zealous endeavours did tend to exclude them, and rent their affection from *Paul* himself, and other faithful Pastors. And again, as their zeal did deviate in the object, so also in the scope proposed, which was, not to gain these Galatians to Christ but popular applause to themselves; and that *Paul*, and such as *Paul* was, being cryed down, they alone might be doted upon with a blind kind of zeal and affection, ver. 17. but lest, by condemning their false zeal, he should have seemed to cry down all zeal, therefore he discovereth what true and praise-worthy zeal is, and this, as it seemeth, with an eye to his own practice, whose zeal towards those Galatians, first, was so ordered, that the thing whereunto his zeal for them did carry him, was in it self good, and for their good and edification. Secondly, it was constant, so that distance of place, which occasioned an alteration in them towards him, had not made him to alter towards them, ver. 18. *Doct. 1.* See chap. 1. ver. 7. *doct. 5.* concerning his suppressing the name of the false Apostles, whereby he sheweth more of indignation towards them, nor he could have done by giving them any designation, though never so base; *They zealously affect you.* 2. Hereticall Preachers and Seducers will be exceedingly fervent and zealous for their erroneous opinions, and pretend much love and affection to the People of God, while they are about to make them imbrace their Errors: for, saith he, *They, to wit, the false Apostles, zealously affect you.* 3. Every thing which goeth under the name of zeal, or which truly hath much of zeal and fervency in it, whether for opinions, or persons, is not to be approven, there being so much of sinfull zeal which an hypocrite may have, and therefore is not to be valued or regarded; So doth the Apostle speak of their zeal, *They zealously affect you, but not well.* 4. There is a renting zeal, which carrieth the person wherein it is, with a violent fervor to rent the Church of Christ, and to create prejudices in the minds of people against their faithfull Pastors while they exte-
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nuate their good, 2 Cor. 10. 10. and above measure aggregate their sins and infirmities; all such zeal is sinfull, and unworthy to be taken notice of: for, the Apostle proveth that their zeal was not good from this, that it carried them to rent those Galatians from Paul, and the Body of the Christian Church; *They would exclude you.* 5. There is a self-seeking zeal, when men, pretending much love to God and to the good of souls, are really hunting after the breath of applause to themselves, and that they alone may have greatest weight in peoples affections, all such zeal is also sinfull: for, he condemneth the zeal of the false Apostles, because their great design in what they did, was to make those Galatians *zealously to affect them.*

6. As the great design of false Teachers, and the upshot of all their most zealous and fervent endeavours, is, to gain credit among the people to their opinions and persons; So the usual method whereby they walk for attaining this end, is, first to alienate the minds of people from their own Pastors, that so they themselves may be looked upon as only worthy to have room in peoples affections; for, this was the method of the false Apostles, *They would exclude you, to wit, from us, that you might affect them,* saith he. 7. The Ministers of Christ would so condemn the counterfeit of saving graces, which may be found in hypocrites, as that they do not in the least measure reflect upon the real graces of God's Spirit, which are found only in true Believers: for, Paul having condemned their false zeal, falleth immediately upon the commendation of true zeal; *But it is good to be zealously affected alwayes in a good thing.* 8. It is not enough that the thing which we do, be in it self good, except our affections be somewhat warmed with love to the duty, and stirred up with an holy indignation and revenge against any thing which would divert us from it: for, this is that zeal which is here commended, *It is good to be zealously affected,* saith he. 9. It is required in godly and approven zeal, first, that it be orderly, neither making nor upholding rents or schisms in the Church, and

betwixt the People of God and those who are over them in the Lord : for, the false ungodly zeal of the false Apostles, is condemned from this, that they *would have excluded those Galatians from Paul*. Secondly, that it be sincere, as aiming, not at base and selfish, but approved ends, such as God's glory, 2 Cor. 11. 2. our own (Rev. 3. 19.) and our neighbours salvation, Col. 4. 13. for, their zeal is condemned from this, that their great design in all they did, was to make the Galatians affect them. Thirdly, that it be according to knowledge (Rom. 10. 2.) as chusing right and approven means for bringing about the proposed end, and not putting forth it self indifferently upon every thing good or bad without choice; for, saith he, *It is good to be zealously affected in a good thing*. Fourthly, that it be constant, not intending or remitting according as more of prosperity or adversity doth attend the making conscience of our duty (Job. 6. 26.) but alwayes one and the same, notwithstanding of any extrinsecal change of that kind; for, saith he, *It is good to be zealously affected alwayes*. Doct. 10. A Minister would labour to have his conversation so christian, that, if need require, he may give his own practice for an instance, or example of any duty which he presseth upon others, as Paul doth here; for, having required constancy in zeal, he hinteth at his own practice, who was zealous for their good alwayes; and not only when he was present with them.

Verf. 19. *My little children, of whom I travel in birth again until Christ be formed in you,*
 20. *I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice, for I stand in doubt of you.*

HE doth yet further pursue the intended scope, which is to perswade them of his affection to them, by making it yet more appear, that his zeal for them was of the right stamp, and not like that of the false Apostles, In that, first, he was at great trouble and pains for their good, such as are the pains of a woman in travel. Secondly,

condly, his design in all his labour and pains, was, not so much to make them affect him (which was all that his adversaries sought after) as, to get the image of Christ (which being once wrought in them by the means of his Ministry, was now marred by their defection) again repaired in them, and its lively likenesses drawn upon them: which expressions of his inward affection, are much sweetened by the affectionate stile of *little children*, given unto them; So that his whole discourse doth breath out no lesse affection than that of a tender mother towards her dear childe under some languishing disease or consumption, ver. 19. And thirdly, that he desired vehemently to be with them face to face, which was no great evidence of any hatred to them, especially considering the end of his desire, to wit, that being more fully acquainted with their case, he might accommodate himself in his speaking to them, whether in meeknesse or severity, unto their temper; and that because, being now at a distance, he could not understand their temper so exactly, and therefore was somewhat perplexed, and in doubt how to deal with them. All which, do expresse to the life, how tender, constant, sincere, and well-ordered his affection and love was towards them, ver. 20.

From Ver. 19. *Learn*, 1. There ought to be such a conformity betwixt the heart and the tongue, that the tender and warm expressions of kindness uttered by our tongue, may be undoubted evidences of that real kindnesse and respect which is seated in the heart; otherwise fair words are but foul flatteries, abominable both to God and man, *Prov. 27. 14.* for, *Paul* doth speak to these Galatians most affectionately, as a mother to her dear children, wherein he would have them to read his very heart; *My little children*, saith he. 2. The Ministerial Calling, is an employment of no small labour and pains, partly, because of much labour and diligence which is required to fit a man for that employment, and for every part of it, *1 Tim. 4. 13, 15. 2d. 20. 20.* and partly, because of many outward troubles and persecutions which do usually attend the

the faithfull discharging of it, *Mat. 10. 17.* but mainly, because the object of that imployment is the charge of people, with relation to their spiritual and eternal concernments, (*Heb. 13. -17.-*) in which, as people are most apt to miscarry, so their miscarrying therein is most dishonourable unto God and dangerous to themselves; and therefore the Minister, whose charge doth ly about those, and maketh conscience of his charge, cannot but be much exercised even to wearynesse, and the wasting of his natural spirits with a tide of contrary affections, as hopes and fears, joy and sorrow, desire and indignation, &c. *2 Cor. 11. 28.* Hence *Paul* setteth forth the measure of his ministerial pains by the travel of a woman with childe; *Of whom I travel in birth*, saith he. 3. Though it be God only, who by His own almighty Power doth beget us to that new and spiritual life of Grace, *Jam. 1. 18. 1 Cor. 3. -6.* yet, He maketh use of called Ministers as the ordinary means and instruments, by whose ministry His Spirit doth effectually work, and bring about the conversion of sinners, *Rom. 10. 17.* and therefore the honour and title of being spiritual fathers and mothers is conferred upon them; hence it is that *Paul* not only calleth them his little children, but also saith, *he did travel in birth with them*, whereby he compareth himself to a woman in travel, and the work of the Ministry to the travel it self, by the means whereof children are born to God. 4. Though those who are once regenerated, cannot totally fall away from grace, so as to stand in need of a second regeneration (for, the seed of God abideth in them, *1 Job. 3. 9.*) yet, they may so far fall away, as that the new man of Grace in them will be much marred, and all lively evidences of their regeneration, ly under ground and in the dark, and so, as that to outward appearance there will be nothing of the life of God in them: for, though *Paul* saith not, he *begot them again*; yet, *he did travel in birth with them again, that so Christ might be formed in them*: which supposeth, that the Image of Christ in them was much darkened, the beauty there-

thereof marred, and their spiritual life and motion hid and hardly discernable, as the life and motion of an unborn childe in the womb. 5. The great end of a Minister's pains, and that, which not being attained, he is not to cease, or to rest satisfied, is not so much his own exoneration, as to have a near conformity to Christ, and the draughts of His Image, consisting both in knowledge (*Col. 3. 10.*) and holiness (*Eph. 4. 24.*) wrought in the hearts and lives of his hearers: for, this was aimed at by Paul; *Until Christ be formed in you*, saith he.

From Vers. 20. *Learn, 1.* The presence of a Pastor with his Flock, is so necessary in order to the entertaining of mutual affection, and the suppression of prejudices when they are yet in the bud, and before they come to any great height, and in order to a Minister's better up-taking of the peoples case and condition, and to his application of suitable and seasonable remedies; that, (though a Minister may sometimes be necessarily withdrawn from his Flock, yet) he ought alwayes have a desire to be present with them, without neglecting any occasion, when it offereth, of returning to them; for, thus was it with Paul, *I desire to be present with you.* 2. A Minister ought to take notice, so far as is possible, of the several conditions and dispositions of his People; that hereby he may know, how to carry himself, and to speak to them in that way which he conceiveth will be most gaining upon every one, admonishing some, reprovng others, comforting and instructing some, and sharply threatening others: for, this we conceive is meant by Paul's *changing of his voice*, in order to which, he desired to be present with them; that so knowing their case, he might the better fit his speech to their condition. 3. As the People of God are not all of one, but of different tempers, some being more tractable, and some more obstinate, some more soft and easie to be wrought upon by the Word, and some more obdured, some more subject to heartlesse discouragements, and others to high and lofty unsobernesse of spirit; So that way of dealing in a Minister

Minister which will be profitable for the one temper, will not be so for another: for, *Paul*, being ignorant of their present temper, *stood in doubt of them*, as fearing, if he did not fall upon a right way of dealing with them, he might do them more hurt than good. 4. Though a Minister may sometimes have reason to doubt what way to take with a people in order to their gaining, and be not a little perplexed, lest there be not successe answerable to his pains; yet he is not to give over, but must go on, doing what is likeliest, and depending upon God for successe: so doth *Paul* here; for, though *he stood in doubt of them*, or was perplexed for them, yet he sendeth this Epistle to them.

Verf. 21. *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the Law, do ye not bear the Law?*

IN the third part of the Chapter, the Apostle confirmeth and illustrateth the truth of the whole preceding dispute concerning our Justification by Faith, and not by Works, and the abolishing of the ancient legal Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, and this by the history of *Abraham's* family, whereby he sheweth the Lord did prefigure not only the doing away of that ancient Dispensation under the dayes of the Gospel; but that also so many as did adhere unto it, (being considered as it was set in opposition to the Covenant of Grace, by those who sought to be justified by the works of the Law) were kept under the bondage of sin and wrath here, and at last should be banished from the face of God. And, on the other hand, that a more clear dispensation of the Covenant of Grace should succeed under the New Testament, and that those who, according to the tenour of that Covenant, did seek to be justified through Faith in Christ, should be the children of God, free from the bondage of Ceremonies and of God's wrath here, and possesse the heavenly inheritance hereafter.

In order to this, the Apostle first professeth in this verf. by

by citing his adversaries and all others, who of their own accord, without and contrary to God's Command, did put themselves again under the yoke of the Mosaical Law, and sought to be justified by the Works thereof, (other wise all Believers are under the Moral Law as the rule of their life, *Eph. 6. 2.*) he prefaceth (I say,) by citing all such to hear what the Law it self, or that Scripture which is a part of those five Books of *Moses* which are called the Law (*Rom. 3. 21.*) doth say to this purpose: and withal he taxeth them indirectly for their not understanding the scope of the Law, and of the doctrine relating to it, notwithstanding of their pretending so much to the knowledge of it. *Dott. 1.* The Minister of Jesus Christ, is so far in the spirit of meeknesse to condescend to the humours of those, who oppose themselves, in order to their gaining, as that he alwayes keep up his authority amongst and over them, as an Ambassador in Christ's stead, *2 Cor. 5. 20.* for, *Paul*, having for condescendence and tendernesse carried himself to them, as an affectionate mother, doth now carry the matter with more authority, citing and commanding them to hear a cleat refutation of their error; *Tell me*, saith he. 2. So ignorant are all men naturally of that righteousness which is of God by Faith, that when it is offered they do what they can to reject it, and (such is their pride and madnesse) go about to establish their own righteousness by Works, betaking themselves to stand or fall according to the sentence of the Law and Covenant of Works; for, the Galatians were thus mad, who, rejecting the offer of Christ's righteousness in the Gospel, desired to be under the Law, to wit so as to be dealt with by God according to the sentence of it. 3. The Doctrine of the written Law, is so far from giving any patrociny to that dangerous error of Justification by Works, That this error ariseth mainly from ignorance of the Law, and chiefly of that which is the scope of the Law, to wit, Christ for righteousness, *Rom. 10. 4.* for, *Paul* doth point at the reason of their so great desire to be under the Law,

Law, even their not hearing the Law, so as to understand it; *Do ye not hear the Law*, saith he.

Verf. 22. *For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free-woman.*

23. *But he who was of the bond-woman, was born after the flesh: but he of the free-woman, was by promise.*

THE Apostle, in the second place, propoundeth the typical history of *Abraham's* family, taken from, *Gen. 16*, and *21*. chapters. The sum whereof is, that as *Abraham* had two sons, to wit, *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, (he had also several others by *Keturah*, *Gen. 25. 2*. but these two are only mentioned, as being appointed by God to prefigure the present purpose) the condition of which two sons did differ in two things, first, That the one, *Ishmael*, was born of a bond-woman or servant, to wit, *Hagar*, *Gen. 16. 1. 15*. and so was but as a servant himself, and not the heir, *Gen. 21. 10*. The other, *Isaac*, was born of a free-woman, to wit, *Sarah*, (*Gen. 21. 2, 3*.) who had been never a servant, but mistress, and joynt in the government of the family with her husband, and therefore *Isaac* himself was no servant, but a free-man, even the heir, ver. 22. A second difference did ly in the principle of their generation and birth; for, *Ishmael* was born *after the flesh*, or by the ordinary strength of nature, his mother *Hagar* being a young woman and fit for conception, *Gen. 16. 2*. but *Isaac* was not conceived nor born from any such principle, *Sarah* his mother being ninety years old when she conceived, *Gen. 17. -17*. and so, according to the course of nature, unfit for conception, *Heb. 11, 12*. but he was born *by promise*, or by vertue of that promise made to *Abraham*, *Gen. 17. 16*, and the miraculous operation of God, ver. 23.

From this history of *Abraham's* family, considered in itself, and leaving the mystery prefigured by it, to its own place, We *Learn*, 1. The best of men are not perfect, there having been some things even in the holy Patriarchs,

triarchs, which were not commended, but only tolerated by God, as a lesser evil for prevention of a greater. Such was their polygamy or marrying of more wives than one, which though contrary to the first institution of Marriage (*Mal. 2. 15. and Mat. 19. 4, 5, 8.*) yet was practised by many of the Patriarchs, as not knowing, or at least not considering what sin was in it, being blinded, partly by the tyranny of common custom, and partly by that great desire which they had to multiply their posterity, that if it were possible the Messias might have descended of their line: Thus even *Abraham* had two wives, a bond-maid, and a free-woman. 2. The best of men are in no small hazard to be so far overpowered with temptations to mis-belief under the delayed performance of divine Promises, and the want of all lawfull probable means for the performance of them, as to close with sinful means for bringing of it about, and to repute themselves free from guilt in so doing, as if a good and necessary end could commend a sinfull mean for attaining to it: for, *Abraham*, having a promise that the blessed Seed should come of him (*Gen. 12. -3.*) and having waited for a childe until *Sarah* his wife through age had lost all hopes of conception, is moved, at her desire, to go-in unto *Hagar* his bond-maid, that he might obtain seed by her (*Gen. 16. 1, 2.*) rather than the Promise should ly unperformed; *The one by a bond-maid*, saith he. 3. The Lord standeth not in need of our sinfull means for bringing about of His own gracious work towards us: for, after that *Ishmael* is sinfully begotten upon the handmaid, the Lord maketh *Sarah* conceive a son miraculously, in whom the Promise was to have its accomplishment; *The other by a free-woman*. 4. The Lord hath placed in the natures, as of beasts and birds, so of men and women, an ordinary power of generation and conception, whereby one generation may succeed to another, until the heavens be no more, and that men who cannot live any long space of time in their own persons, may in a kind perpetuate their life and memory in their posterity unto all

all succeeding generations; Thus *Yshmael* was born after the flesh, or by the ordinary strength of nature. 5. As the power of God is engaged to give a being and subsistence unto every thing contained within the compass of a Promise, *Isa. 46. 11.* So it doth accordingly perform, even when all ordinary means and second causes do fail, and become uselesse for bringing about the thing promised: for, a promise being made to *Abraham*, that *Sarah* should have a childe, she conceiveth and beareth *Ysaac*, not after the flesh, or according to the ordinary course of nature, but through vertue of that Promise; But be of the free woman, was by promise, saith he.

Verf. 24. Which things are an Allegorie; for these are the two Covenants; the one from the mount *Sinai*, which giveth to bondage, which is *Agar*.

25. For this *Agar* is mount *Sinai* in Arabia, and answereth to *Jerusalem* which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

IN the third place, the Apostle expoundeth the mystery which was lurking under, and prefigured by the former history. In order to which he sheweth, that those things, or the Scripture presently cited is an Allegoric, that is, besides the literal historical sense of the words, God intended that the purpose contained in them should shadow forth the state of His Church in the following particulars, So that *Abrahams* two Wives did represent the two Covenants, to wit, the old Covenant, or the Covenant of Grace under the old Administration, (*Heb. 8. 7.*) which Covenant was greatly mistaken, and did degenerate unto a plain Covenant of Works, in the sense of many who did adhere unto it. 2. The new Covenant or the Covenant of Grace under the new Administration, *Heb. 8. 8.* The first of which Covenants he sheweth was prefigured by *Agar* the bond-woman; and he describeth it, 1. from the place where it was first given, to wit, upon mount *Sinai*. 2. From the like effect produced by

by it with that of *Agar*, to wit, that as *Hagar*, so this Covenant especially as it was generally mistaken for a Covenant of Works, did beget children unto bondage, that is, they who adhered to that Covenant, so taken, were not thereby freed from their bondage to sin, Satan, and God's wrath (chap. 3. 10.) and were of a servile mercenary disposition, as doing whatever they did in God's service, not from love, but slavish fear, and of purpose to merit Heaven by their good works, *Mark* 10. 17. This is ver. 24. And, (having, as it were in a parenthesis, shewen the fitnessse of the former resemblance, because mount *Sinai*, where the old Covenant was first delivered, is also in God's providence called *Agar* by the Arabians) he describeth this Covenant thirdly, from those, who in the time of the Apostles did tenaciously adhere to it, by shewing that the earthly *Jerusalem*, or the Jewish Church, not, as she was in her best times, but in that present age did answer, that is, as the Original doth bear, was in the same rank, or did keep a kind of harmony and concord with that Covenant, because that Church, and the members thereof, called here her children, did remain in a servile condition, which he shewed before, was the fruit of adhering unto this Covenant, as it was now adulterated and corrupted, ver. 25. Now, though the Spirit of God maketh use of the history of *Abraham's* having two wives, to set forth a spiritual mystery, not condemning his fact; yet, this doth not justify his polygamy, no more than injustice in stewards is justified by the parable, *Luke* 16. 1. it being sufficient that the Word of God doth condemn polygamy elsewhere, *Mal.* 2. 15. and *Mat.* 19. 4, 5, 6. *Dock.* 1. Though there be only one genuine sense and meaning of every place of Scripture, which is sometimes expressed in proper (*Gen.* 1. 1.) sometimes in figurative and borrowed speeches, *Luke* 13. 32. (otherwise, if Scripture had moe meanings than one, it should be ambiguous and doubtfull) yet this hindereth not, but that the sense of Scripture may be sometimes not simple, but composed, so that there is one thing signified

nified immediately by the words, and another thing immediately by the purpose comprehended in the words, and but mediately by the words themselves, as it is in types and allegories: for, this history did immediately set forth the state of *Abraham's* family, and the state of *Abraham's* family did shadow forth the state of God's Church in the particulars afore-mentioned; *Which things are an Allegory*, saith he. 2. Though the Spirit of God speaking in Scripture, giveth us expresse warrant to expound some places of Scripture, as holding forth, by way of type or allegory, some further purpose, than what the words do either in their proper or usual acception bear; yet it doth not follow hence, that we may without such warrant expound other Scriptures after the same manner, or hold forth our witty inventions of that kind, as a part of the meaning intended by the Spirit of God in those Scriptures: for, the Spirit of God expressly sheweth, that this Scripture, or, *those things are an Allegory*. 3. It is a very usual way of speaking in Scripture, whereby the name of the thing signified, is given to that which doth only signifie and represent that thing; So is it in the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper, *Mark 14. -22.* and so is it here, where the Apostle, speaking of *Abraham's* two wives, saith, *Those are the two Covenants*; not that they were essentially such, but because they did represent and prefigure them. 4. Though the Covenant of Grace, entred by God with sinners in Christ, hath been but one for substance in all ages of the Church, *Heb. 13. 8.* yet, there hath been divers wayes of administering it, one especially under the Old Testament, and another under the New: hence is it, that this one Covenant is held forth as differing from it self, and as if it were not one, but two; for, *those are the two Covenants*, saith he. 5. The Covenant of Grace, as it was dispensed under the Old Testament, (because the Law, and the curse of the Law, was then much pressed, and the grace contained therein but darkly propounded) was therefore generally looked upon as a Covenant of Works, and the

the most part did so rely upon it, and expect life from it : for, the Apostle speaketh of the Covenant made on *Sinai*, in this sense, while he saith, *it did gender unto bondage*, to wit, as it was mistaken for a Covenant of Works ; and how it is said in that sense to gender unto bondage, is cleared in the Exposition ; *The one from the mount Sinai, which gendreth unto bondage.* 6. *Hagar*, *Sarab's* bondmaid, did fitly represent and prefigure the Covenant of Grace, as it was delivered upon mount *Sinai*, not only for the reasons contained in the Text, but also because as *Hagar* was once a second wife to *Abraham*, and *Ishmael* her son for a while *Abraham's* presumed heir, *Gen. 17. 18.* yet, after she began to contest with her mistress *Sarab* (*Gen. 16. 4.*) and her son to persecute *Isaac* the childe of promise, both mother and son were cast out of *Abraham's* family, and deprived of all hope of any inheritance in the Land of promise, *Gen. 21. 9, 10.* So, the Law of *Moses*, or the Covenant given by God upon mount *Sinai*, while it was rightly used as a Pedagogue leading to Christ, it did bring forth children to God, heirs of the heavenly inheritance, such were all sincere Believers under the Old Testament ; but when it was abused, and set up as a Covenant of Works in opposition to the Covenant of Grace, it did then bring forth children unto bondage, and those who did so adhere unto it, were detained under damnable slavery, and cut-off from Christ, *Gal. 5. 2.* for, the Apostle, shewing that this Covenant was prefigured by *Agar*, doth hint at one reason which leadeth us to seek after moe ; *Which Covenant*, saith he, *is Agar* : for *Agar* is mount *Sinai* in *Arabia*. 7. No Church or People hath Religion so firmly established, which in progresse of time may not make such apostasie from it, as that there will be a vast difference betwixt what they once were, and what they now are : for, such a Church was *Jerusalem* once, *Psal. 76. 1, 2.* but now her case was much altered ; Therefore, saith he, this Covenant doth answer, or keepeth concord with *Jerusalem*, not which once was, but now is (importing there was a

foul change to the worse) And is in bondage with her children.

Verf. 26. But Jerusalem which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all.

THE Apostle, having shewen that *Hagar* did prefigure the first or old Covenant, doth now briefly describe that second or new Covenant which was prefigured in *Sarah*: First, by declaring where that Covenant did reside, or who adhered to it, to wit, *Jerusalem* which is above, whereby is not meant the Church triumphant in Heaven; for, it is clear he speaketh of a Church, wherof Believers upon earth are members, even the Militant Church, especially of the truly regenerate, claiming to life according to the tenour of the Covenant of Grace, although the Catholick Church-visible be not excluded, seeing it is a Church begetting children to God by the use of Ordinances, and is here called *Jerusalem*, because that City was a type of the true Church, for her compactnesse and order (*Psal.* 132. 3.) beauty (*Psal.* 48. 2.) and divine protection which did attend her, *Isa.* 31. 5. and this Church is said to be *above*, because her original is from Heaven, *Jam.* 1. 17. and the lively members thereof have their conversation in Heaven, *Philip.* 3. 20. Secondly, by shewing the state wherein those who adhere to this Covenant are; a state of freedom from sin, (*Rom.* 6. 18.) the curse of the Law (*Rom.* 8. 1.) and the yoke of that ancient legal dispensation, *Ephes.* 2. 15. Thirdly, by declaring who are the children of this Covenant, or members of the true Church adhering to this Covenant, even all sincere Believers, whether Jews or Gentiles. *Doct.* 1. The Lord doth never so far give way to the spirit of error and rage of persecution, but even in the worst of times He hath some who do keep their garments clean, and hold up a banner for Truth, notwithstanding of all contrary endeavours for the utter extirpation of it: for, though *Jerusalem*, the usual place of Gods abode,

abode, was at this time in bondage with her children, a very receptacle of Christ's enemies (*Act. 8. 1.*) and chief head of all that opposition which was against the Gospel, *Act. 9. 2.* yet, God wanted not a Church, even *Jerusalem which is above.* 2. As freedom from God's wrath and curse may be attained and enjoyed under bodily bondage and oppression: so, being attained, it maketh the attainer truly free, so that all his other bondage is not to be valued much: for, the true Church, though for the time heavily oppressed in her members, *ver. -29.* of whom some were also in a state of bodily servitude, *Col. 3. 22.* yet, because of her freedom from God's wrath and curse, she is said to be free, as if this bondage being removed there had been none remaining; *Jerusalem which is above, is free.* 3. Though those who are regenerate, do owe their new birth to God their Father only, in so far as the vertue and power whereby they are brought from death to life is only His, *Eph. 1. 19.* and neither Church-Ministry, nor any created power whatsoever, can by any proper efficiency reach this so divine and supernatural an effect; yet, the Church is the mother of all the Regenerate, in so far as she is gifted with Ministers (*1 Cor. 12. 28.*) whose office is to dispense the Word, which Word, being blessed of God, is both the seed of this new birth, *1 Pet. 1. 23.* as also the food and milk (*1 Pet. 2. 2.*) whereby the new-born children are nourished: for, in this sense the Apostle saith, *Jerusalem is the mother of us all.* 4. Though no Church, no, nor the Church universal, which is most properly our mother, ought to be heard and obeyed, farther than her Commands do agree with the Commands of God our Father, *Act. 4. 19.* yet, we are still to give her respect and reverence, as also to employ our parts and graces, and all that is ours, for the defence and advancement of her just interest in our places and stations, and that because she is the mother of us all.

Verſ. 27. For it is written, *Rejoyce thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travellest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.*

THe Apostle, in the fourth place, confirmeth the truth of the former myſterie by a Scripture taken out of *Iſa. 54. 1.* where the Prophet doth direct his ſpeech to the Chriſtian Church under the Goſpel, as ſhe was to be in her beginnings, and about the time of Chriſt's incarnation and ſufferings (whereof he had moſt clearly prophesied, chap. 53.) and having deſigned her by the name of a barren woman that beareth not, and travelleth not, becauſe of the paucity of Converts to the Chriſtian Faith at that time; and of a ſeemingly deſolate woman without an husband, becauſe of the croſſe and perſecution, which ſhe was then to be under, he exhorteth her to rejoyce, and to expreſſe her joy againſt all contrary diſcouragements; and that becauſe her ſtate ſhould be changed, and ſhe made a more fruitfull mother, by a numerous acceſſion of converts to the Chriſtian Faith from among the Gentiles, than the Jewiſh Synagogue her ſelf, who formerly had enjoyed God's grace and preſence, and at that time ſhould ſeem to be more owned of God becauſe of the great proſperity, multitude of followers, and outward beauty attending her beyond the Chriſtian Church. *Doct. 1.* The ſupream Judge, by whom all controversies of Religion are to be determined, and in whoſe ſentence we are to reſt, is the holy Spirit ſpeaking in Scripture: for, *Paul* in this preſent controverſie appealeth to Scripture; *For it is written*, ſaith he. 2. It is not the Church's lot to be alwayes aſike fruitfull in bringing forth children to God; ſhe hath her barren times, wherein the labours of Chriſt's Miniſters are attended with little ſucceſſe, and but very few are converted by their pains, and this even ſometimes when outward means are ſuch, as may be moſt promiſing of fruitfullneſſe,

ness, the Lord hereby inculcating this necessary Lesson, That the great work of converting souls dependeth not upon most promising means, *1 Cor. 3. 6.* for, the Prophet, having an eye mainly (as we shewed in the Exposition) to the first beginnings of the Christian Church, when Christ Himself was a Preacher, *Rom. 15. 8.* calleth her by the name of *barren that beareth not, that travaileth not.* 3. The Lord will sometimes for good and necessary reasons (expressed, *chap. 1. ver. 13. doct. 6.*) give His Church and People so far over to the rage of persecuters, and own them as little under trouble to the view of the world, as if He had no interest in them as their Lord and Husband: for, in this respect, the Apostle calleth the Christian Church *desolate*, that is, without an husband in appearance; *For the desolate, &c.* 4. A false declining; yea, an apostate Church may be, to outward appearance, much more owned of God, as to the multitude of followers, external beauty, outward prosperity and freedom from the crosse, than the true Church; So that none of those things are infallible marks of a true Church: for, the Jewish Synagogue, because of those things, seemed to have an husband, when the Christian Church was desolate; *Than she that hath an husband.* 5. The wise Lord hath thought it fit to make His Church, and real Believers in the Church, lyable, as to their outward condition mainly, to great variety and many changes, it being almost impossible that we who are of such changeable tempers our selves, should bear any one condition right for any long time together, and not miscarry one way or other under it, *Psal. 55. -19.* for, the Church, for that time barren and desolate, was to have many children; *The desolate hath*, or, as the words may also reade, shall have *many children.* 6. It is the duty of God's People to compose their affections, especially those of joy and sorrow, suitably to God's various way of dealing with them: for, the Church, before barren, and therefore sad, is to change her sorrow into joy upon God's changing His way of dealing with her;

Rejoyce thou barren : for the desolate hath many more children. 7. The enlargement of Christ's Kingdom, and gaining of many sinners to God, together with the weakning of Satan's interest in the world, ought to be entertained with much joy : for, saith he, *Rejoyce, break forth and cry : for the desolate hath many more children than she that hath an husband.* 8. So many are the discouragements of the Godly, and so many causes of grief, which are as heavy weights and strong bars to bear down and keep in their joy, That this duty of rejoycing is not easily come at, even when God in His gracious providence giveth reason for it : Hence the command is inculcated in several words, *Rejoyce, cry, and break forth* ; which last, supposeth that many restraints from this duty are lying-on, which must be broken-through before the heart can attain to it.

Verf. 28. Now we, Brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

THE Apostle, in the last place applieth this typical history, and the scriptural confirmation of the mystery prefigured by it. And first, by asserting what himself really was, and what in charity he yet conceived many of them at least to be, he sheweth the only way of attaining the heavenly inheritance, as children, to be by vertue of the Covenant-promise, in resemblance of *Isaac* who was so begotten, ver.-23. and tacitly implyeth, that it is not attained by vertue of our own natural endeavours, or fleshly priviledges, whereof the Jewish Synagogue and her followers did boast, (chap. 6. ver. 12-) and wherein they were represented by the childe of the bond-woman, *Ishmael*, ver. 23-. *Dott. 1.* A Minister ought to prosecute general Doctrine so far, untill it be brought home to the particular state and case of his hearers, by pertinent and close application, as that wherein the life and power of preaching doth mainly consist, *1 Tim. 5. 20.* for, *Paul* resteth not untill he make application

cation of the Doctrine in hand; *Now we, Brethren, as Isaac was, &c.* 2. The humours of people are sometimes so ticklish, that a Minister hath need to proceed to the work of applying general Truths unto them with that warinesse and circumspection, as to point out their duty, and what he would have them to be, rather by shewing his charitable thoughts of them that they are so already, than by any direct up-stirring of them to it: for, so doth *Paul* here point at their duty of quitting confidence in the flesh, and of betaking themselves to Faith in the Promise, by shewing he did in charity judge of them as those who had done so already; *Now we, Brethren, are children of the promise.* 3. That any of *Adam's* lost seed, who are by nature children of wrath, do become the children of God, and heirs of eternal life, is only by vertue of the gracious promises of the Covenant of Grace, in so far as, first, they are begotten into a new and spiritual life, not from any principle of natural strength and vigor, *Rom. 9. 16.* but by the force of those Promises, enlivened by the Spirit of God, *2 Cor. 10. 4.* And secondly, their right to Heaven ariseth, not from any works which they do, *Tit. 3. 5:* but from Faith in the Promise, *Job. 3. 16.* for, in this sense we are called *children of the promise.*

Verf. 29. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

HE applyeth the present purpose, in the second place, for consolation to the true members of the Christian Church, against those persecutions which they sustained from the false Apostles, and such others as adhered to the Jewish Synagogue, and to the doctrine of Justification by Works, first, by shewing that the like persecution did befall *Isaac*, and was prefigured by those bitter mockings which *Isaac*, who was begotten by the power of Gods Spirit, according to the tenour of the Promise, did suffer from *Ishmael*, who was begotten by the ordinary strength

strength of nature, and boasted in his carnal outward priviledges, (See *Gen. 21. 9.*) *As it was then, so it is now*, saith he. *Doct. 1.* It hath been, and yet is the ordinary lot of God's Children, to suffer hard things from the men of this world, the Lord having seen it most fitting, that by the crosse they come to their Crown, and through many, tribulations enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, *Act. 14. 22.* for, *Paul* speaketh of persecutions, as a thing common to the Church in all ages; *But as then, even so it is now*, saith he. *2.* The worst persecutions and troubles which the Godly endure, do frequently come from those who are otherwise tyed unto them by most strict and nearest relations, of kinred, acquaintance, or such like; This being Satan's aim herein, that their sufferings may have so much the more of bitter gall and wormwood in them, as they are inflicted by such, from whom better things in reason might have been expected, *Psal. 55. 12, 13.* for, *Isaac* is persecuted by his brother *Ishmael*; *But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him who was born after the Spirit.* *3.* Amongst those other persecutions, which the Godly must endure, the scourge of tongues is one, and not the least, especially when godlesse men, taking occasion from their low condition, do mock at their interest in God, and labour to shame them from their confidence, as if the Promise of God were of none effect: for, *Ishmael's* mocking of *Isaac*, being yet a childe, spoken of, *Gen. 21. 9.* (wherewith was doubtlesse joyned his mocking of the Promise made to *Isaac*) is here called persecution; *He that was born after the flesh persecuted, &c.* *4.* Whatever wicked men may pretend; yet the true rise of all their malice and opposition to those who are truly godly, is their inward antipathy to the work of Grace in the Godly, which they themselves want: for, so much is hinted at by the description here given of *Ishmael* the persecuter, *he was born after the flesh*, he had no more than what the power of nature did carry him to; and of persecuted *Isaac*, *he was born after the Spirit*, or by the power of the Spirit of God, wherby he did pre-figure

figure those who are truly regenerate, which are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, *Job. 1. 13. Doct. 5.* This may furnish with no small encouragement and comfort under hardest sufferings, that nothing befalleth us but what is common to men, and hath been the Church's ordinary lot in former ages: for, this is *Paul's* scope, even to comfort Christians under their present sufferings, because *Isaac* did indure persecution as well as they; *But as then, even so it is now,* saith he.

Verf. 30. *Neverthelesse, what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman.*

HE comforteth them, secondly, from this, That the Jewish Synagogue, and those who adhered thereto, prefigured by *Agar and Ishmael*, should be cast out of the Church of God from the society of the Saints, and from the inheritance of life everlasting, according as was shadowed forth by the like sentence of ejection from *Abraham's* family past upon *Hagar and Ishmael*, at first by *Sarrah*, (*Gen. 21. 10.*) and authorized afterwards by God Himself, *Gen. 21. 12. Doct. 1.* The Childe of God can have no solid comfort against, nor yet be sufficiently guarded from stumbling at the outwardly prosperous state of the wicked, or the afflicted state of the godly, untill he consider what is God's mind revealed in Scripture either of the one or the other: for, the Apostle, to comfort them against the wicked their prosperity and persecution flowing from it, doth lead them to Gods mind in Scripture; *Neverthelesse, saith he, what saith the Scripture?*
2. Though God be slow to anger, and is not easily provoked wholly to dissolve and cast off a Church, or People, who were once named by His Name, even when they turn persecuting apostates; yet if they be not gained by His long-suffering patience, but, notwithstanding, go on to persecute truth, and to maintain their damnable here-

heresies. He will quit them at the last, by suffering them to make total apostasy from Him: for, the Jewish Synagogue, though persecuting Truth, and maintaining Justification by Works, and several other Errors, was not yet cast off by God, but was to be rejected shortly after this, as is not obscurely hinted at by the Apostle while he citeth this Scripture, leaving the application of it unto themselves, *Cast out the bond-woman and her son, &c.*

3. As it is no small disadvantage to Truth, and to those who do maintain it, when their persecuting adversaries do lurk under the mask of God's true Church, and are generally taken for such: So it is no lesse comfort when God taketh off that mask, and maketh it appear unto the world, that they are not the Church of God, but the Synagogue of Satan: for, the Apostle's scope, is, to comfort the Christian Church, that the Jewish Synagogue, who for the time gave out her self and was generally taken for the true Church, and thereby procured no small authority to her erroneous doctrine and way, should shortly be cast out, and not have so much as the face of a Church; *What saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond-woman.* 4. There is no Salvation, nor any hope of Salvation unto any who are without the true Church: for, the Jewish Synagogue being once un-churched, her children, and those who adhered in all things to her, were debarred from the heavenly inheritance, as *Agar* and *Ishmael* once being cast out of *Abrahams* family, *Ishmael* was thereby debarred from having any part in the promised Land; *Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir, &c.* 5. The Doctrine of Justification by Works, when it's not only doctrinally maintained, but also practically walked in, doth exclude the maintainer of it from having any part in the Kingdom of Heaven: for, so much was prefigured by the son of the bond-woman, against whom a sentence is passed, that *he shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman.*

Verf. 31. *So then, Brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free.*

HE comforteth them, thirdly, from this, That they who for the time were persecuted by the Jewish Synagogue, were not children of the bond-woman, or members of that company and society, which was prefigured by *Hagar*, and so in no hazard from the former terrible sentence, but being children of the free-woman, or members of that Church which was prefigured by *Sarah*, they had right to the heavenly inheritance; whereby, as by all which he hath formerly said, he doth indirectly exhort those Galatians to quit their present error of seeking after Justification by Works, and their tenacious adherance to that ancient Pedagogie of *Moses*, as they would not exclude themselves from the heavenly inheritance. *Dock. 1.* As a Minister must sometimes denounce most terrible judgments against the obstinate and godlesse; So he ought most carefully to guard such denunciations as those; lest they to whom they do not appertain make application of them, and be discouraged by them: for, *Paul* doth guard the former denunciation, while he saith, *So then, we are not children of the bond-woman.* 2. The heaviest denunciation of fearfull judgments to come upon any, are speaking warnings unto us to flee from that way wherein those have walked who are so threatned: for, having shewn that the bond-woman with her son, were to be cast out, he inferreth, *So then we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free*, which hath the force of an indirect exhortation to quit all relation unto the bond-woman, as they would escape the threatned judgment.

H A P. V.

IN the first part of this Chapter, he exhorteth them to persist in their Christian Liberty, from the bondage of the Mosaical Yoke, and chiefly, that they would not seek after Justification by these Ceremonial Observances: In order to which the observation of the Ceremonial Law was mainly urged by the false Apostles, *Act. 15. 2.* Which exhortation he presseth, 1. directly; because, first, Christ had purchased that liberty, ver. 1. Secondly, Circumcision did deprive the person circumcised of all benefit by Christ, ver. 2. Thirdly, it engaged him to keep the whole Law, and so made his Salvation impossible, ver. 3. Fourthly, seeking after Justification by these Observances, was a renouncing of Christ, ver. 4. Fifthly, *Paul*, and other converted Jews, sought not to be justified by these, but by Faith, ver. 5. Sixthly, the Command enjoyning Circumcision, had now ceased, ver. 6. Next, he presseth the exhortation indirectly, first, by reproving them for their defection, ver. 7. and by obviating two objections, ver. 8, 9. Secondly, by professing his hope of their recovery, ver. 10. Thirdly, by refuting a calumny spread of himself, as if he had preached Circumcision, ver. 11. Fourthly, by wishing the prime seducers were cut off, ver. 12.

In the second part of the Chapter, he exhorteth them to use their liberty aright; for which he giveth two rules, 1. They would not give licence to their fleshly corruptions. 2. They would serve one another by love, ver. 13. The latter of which he inforceth Because, first, love is the compend of all duty, ver. 14. Secondly, dangerous effects would follow upon the want of it, ver. 15. and prescribeth an help for reducing the first rule in practice, to wit, walking in the Spirit, ver. 16, 17, 18. And having cleared what it is to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, v. 19, 20, 21. and what to walk in the Spirit, from the respective effects

effects of both *Flesh* and *Spirit*, ver. 22, 23. he useth one argument against fulfilling the lusts of the flesh; because they were engaged to crucifie them, ver. 24. and another, for walking in the Spirit, because they all pretended at least, to regeneration, and the first principles of a spiritual life, ver. 25. and concludeth with a dehortation from ambition, provoking and envying one another, ver. 26.

Verf. 1. *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not intangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

THe Apostle, first, exhorteth them stedfastly, constantly, and against all contrary opposition, to maintain both in judgment and practice the former doctrine of the Churches freedom, especially from the Levitical Ceremonies. Secondly, he dehorteth them from coming under that intolerable bondage, which did attend the making conscience of those ceremonial observances, *Act. 15. 10.* and had some resemblance with that bondage of Idolatry, under which they formerly were, with relation to which, he saith, *be not again intangled.* See chap. 4. ver. 9. Thirdly, he inforceth the exhortation more directly by six arguments. The first whereof, which is in this verse, is, Because Christ had purchased this freedom to the Church by His Blood. *Doct. 1.* Then only is it seasonable to labour upon the affections of an erring people by exhortation and reproof, when sufficient pains have been first taken to inform their judgments, and by strength of reason to convince them of their error: otherwayes exhortations, perswasions, and reproofs will prove but poor and weak arguments: for, *Paul* useth this method here, while having formerly gone about by Scripture and Reason to convince them of their Error, he doth now exhort them; *Stand fast therefore, &c.* 2. Every man by nature is a bondslave, as being under the bondage of sin (*Rom. 6. 17-*) Satan (*Eph. 1. -2.*) the curse

curse of the Law, *Gal. 3. 10.* The Jews moreover were under bondage to the Ceremonial Law, the observing whereof was a bondage because of the great trouble, pain in the flesh and expence which did attend the observation of it ; and therefore it especially is meant by the yoke of bondage in this place. See *Act. 15. 10.* for, while he saith, *Christ hath made us free*, he supposeth a foregoing-bondage. 3. Jesus Christ, by his obedience and death (*chap. 4. 4, 5.*) hath purchased freedom and liberty unto His Church ; a liberty not to do evil, *Rom. 6. 1.* nor from the yoke of new obedience, *Mat. 11. 29.* nor from the crosse, *Mark 8. 34.* nor yet from that due obedience and reverence which inferiours ow to superiours, *Col. 3. 22. Rom. 13. 1.* but from the dominion of sin, *Rom. 6. 14.* the tyranny of Satan, *2 Tim. 2. 25, 26.* the curse (*Gal. 3. 13.*) and irritating power of the Law, *Rom. 7. 5, 6.* from observing the Ceremonial Law of *Moses*, *Col. 2. 14.* and much more from subjecting our Consciences to the Rites, Doctrines, Ceremonies and Laws of men in the matter of Worship, *Col. 2. 20.* for, saith he, *Christ hath made us free.* 4. The consideration of the worth and price which Christ hath put upon our freedom and liberty in all the fore-mentioned particulars, even such as He hath given Himself for the purchase of it, ought to indear it unto us so much, as that contrary to all opposition, and to the utmost of our power and abilities, and upon all hazard whatsoever, we may with courage and constancy, in our places and stations, stand to the defence of it : for, so much doth the Apostle enjoin, saying, *Stand fast therefore to the liberty, and that because Christ hath made us free.* 5. Though civil liberty and freedom from bodily bondage be so much desired, that even before we be called to it, we are ready to break all bonds and aspire to be at it, *Jude ver. 8.* Yet, so ignorant are we of that worth, which is in spiritual liberty and freedom from spirituall bondage, that hardly can we be excited to seek after it, or made to stand to it when it is attained, but are in daily hazard to return to the flesh-

flesh-pots of *Egypt*, preferring our former bondage to our present liberty. Hence the Apostle findeth it necessary to inculcate this duty so much of *standing to the liberty*, and of *not being intangled again with the yoke of bondage*. 6. Multiplicity of external Rites and significant Ceremonies in the matter of Worship, is not only a burden and yoke to the conscience, hard to be born, but also an intangling and insnaring yoke, especially when folk do place all their religion in these, so that when once the conscience hath stooped to take on this yoke, hardly can it again be shaken off, the truth whereof doth hold in Rites and Ceremonies, which are even appointed of God, but much more in those, which are appointed only by men: for, the Apostle calleth the Ceremonial Law a yoke, and such as would intangle them; *Be not intangled again with the yoke of bondage*; he alludeth to oxen whose necks are tyed to the yoke with cords, or somewhat else, that they may not shake it off.

Verf. 2. *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.*

HE addeth a second argument to inforce the exhortation, wherein, having opposed his own Apostolick Authority for confirming the truth of what he is to say against all who would contradict it, he affirmeth that the observing of any one Ceremony, and especially of Circumcision, (to wit, as of a thing, which ought of necessity to be done, and as a part of a mans righteousness necessary to salvation; in which sense it was pressed by the false Apostles, *Act. 15. 2.*) did cut off the observer from all benefit by Jesus Christ. The reasons of which sentence, are, first, the holding up of Circumcision, and by consequence the whole bulk of that Mosaical Dispensation, did say in effect that Christ was not yet come, seeing all those were to be done away at His coming, *Heb. 9. 10.* Secondly, Christ must either be our whole righteousness and compleat Saviour, or not at all, *Act.*

4. 12. *Iſa.* 42. 8. So that by joyning Circumciſion with Chriſt, as a neceſſary part of their righteouſneſſe, and a cauſe of ſalvation, Chriſt did ceaſe from being a Saviour to them at all. *Dock.* 1. A Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt ought not to ſatiſfie himſelf in this, that, what he ſpeaketh is pertinent and appoſit to the preſent purpoſe, but would alſo endeavour, that thoſe to whom he ſpeaketh may with attention and faith receive it off his hand, In order to which, it is not inconvenient that all-alongs his diſcourſe he labour to quicken their attention by ſpeaking ſomewhat for that very end, eſpecially when he is to utter any Truth of ſingular concernment, or from receiving whereof he apprehendeth the hearers may be ſomewhat averſe: for, ſuch a truth is here delivered by *Paul*, and therefore he prefixes a note of attention to it; *Behold*, ſaith he. 2. A Miniſter ought to be ſo confident of the truth of his doctrine, and of his own authority from Chriſt to deliver it, that although his doctrine be contradicted, and his authority undervalued, he may yet with boldneſſe aſſert both the one and the other: for, though *Paul's* Apoſtolicke Authority was queſtioned, (See upon chap. 1. ver. 12.) and the Truth which he here holdeth forth much contradicted, *Act.* 15. 2. Yet he oppoſeth his own Authority for the confirmation of this Truth againſt all who would oppoſe it; *Behold*, I *Paul* ſay unto you, if ye be circumciſed. 3. That *Paul*, in this diſpute, excludeth from Juſtification not only works flowing from the ſtrength of man's free-will, without grace, but alſo thoſe which flow from a gracious root wrought in the heart by Chriſt, appeareth from this, that thoſe againſt whom he diſputeth professed faith in Chriſt, (and ſo could not maintain that the works of a natural man, deſtitute of Chriſt, did juſtifie) otherwayes, this had been no cogent argument to refute their opinion, that if they were circumciſed, Chriſt ſhould profit them nothing. 4. Many do profeſſe Chriſt who ſhall receive no ſaving advantage by Him, eſpecially they who rely upon any thing beſides Him, or joyntly with Him,

as the meritorious cause of their salvation : for, saith he, *If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.*

Verf. 3. *For I testifie again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law.*

Here is a third Argument, to which also *Paul* premit-
teth his Apostolical Authority, seriously affirming,
and by a publick profession confirming, (for so the word
rendred *testifie* doth signifie) that whosoever now
(*Christ* the substance being come) did observe Circum-
cision (to wit, in the way wherein it was urged by the
false Apostles, *Act. 15. 2.*) he was thereby engaged to
keep the whole Law, and this, the whole Ceremonial
and Judicial Law, (Circumcision being the initiatory
Sacrament engaging the Receiver to the whole Mosaical
Pedagogic, *Exod. 12. 48.*) and the whole Moral Law,
and that under the hazard of condemnation. The rea-
son whereof, is, That no lesse than universal and perfect
obedience to the Law in all its precepts is required unto
this, that a man be justified by Works, *Gal. 3. 10.*
Doff. 1. Of how much the nearer concernment unto the
salvation of hearers any Truth is, the Minister of *Christ*
ought so much the more to insist upon it, and with so
much the greater seriousness and fervency to inculcate
and presse it, as a matter of life and death ; that people
may know he believeth, and therefore speaketh, and con-
sequently may be the more moved with what he spea-
keth : for, *Paul* speaking of a Truth, the not-receiving
wherereof would have condemned those *Galatians*, he
doth with much vehemency insist upon the pressing of it;
I testifie again, saith he, *to every man that is circumcised.*
2. Because it is a matter of no small difficulty to get
those reclaimed who are engaged in an evil course, *Jer.*
13. 23. therefore frequent testimonies would be given
by *Christ's* Ministers against them in it ; that hereby
the guilty party may have the lesse of ease and peace in
their way, and thereby, through *God's* blessing upon

His own mean be made to quit it, *2 Tim. 2. 25.* And at least, the Lord's Servants may be the more exoner'd, *Ezek. 3. 19.* and others of the Lord's People preserv'd from being infected with that sin, which they do so much and so frequently testifie against, *1 Tim. 5. 20.* for, in order to those ends, *Paul* (having once, and oftener, both in this Epistle, and by his preaching, doubtlesse, while he was with those Galatians, testified against this dangerous error of theirs) doth here give further testimony against it, while he saith, *For I testifie against every man,* 3. It is wholly impossible for any meer man to keep the Law of God perfectly in this life, and to obtain salvation by so doing, *Paul* taketh this for granted; otherwise this argument, that circumcision did engage them to keep the whole Law, under hazard of condemnation, had not been cogent; *He is a debtor to do the whole Law.* 4. Though Believers in Jesus Christ be not deliver'd from their obligation to the least duty which is required by any precept of the Moral Law, *Mat. 5. 19.* yet, they are not under that exact rigor and condemning power of the Law, whereby eternal wrath is denounc'd against the sinner for the meanest breach of the Law, *Deut. 27. 26.* for, while he speaketh of their being debtors to do the whole Law, as a sad terrifying consequence of their being circumcised, it must be understood not simply of their obligation to obedience, but of an obligation under the penalty of the Law's curse; and hereby it is import'd that sincere Believers are not under this obligation, else the argument were of no force.

Verf. 4. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from Grace.

Followeth a fourth Argument, to wit, Whosoever did observe the Levitical Ceremonies as they were press'd by the false Apostles, or sought to be justified by their observing of them, they by so doing had renounc'd Christ and all benefit to be had by Him, (for, the word rendred

rendred *Christ is become of no effect to you*, signifieth, ye are made void of, and separated from Christ) and had fallen from the way and doctrine of Free-grace : for, *Grace* here seemeth to be taken for the doctrine of *Grace*, as *Tit. 2. 11.* The reason of the consequence, is, that *Grace* and *Works* are not consistent in the justification of a sinner ; if the one have any hand in it, the other hath none, *Rom. 11. 6.* *Dott. 1.* Those sad consequences mentioned here, and in the preceding verses, do not strike against the observing of Circumcision simply, and at all times and cases, (for, even at this very time the observance thereof was tolerated to the weak Jews, *Rom. 14. 6.* and to some of the stronger sort also, as of a thing at that time indifferent to them, for eschewing the offence of the weak, *Act. 16. 3.*) but as it was pressed by the false Apostles, even as the cause of a mans Justification before God : for, to be *circumcised*, and to be *justified by the Law*, are equivalent phrases in the Apostle's meaning, as is clear from ver. 2, 3. compared with this ; *Whosoever of you are justified, or seek to be justified by the Law.* 2. To make apostasie from Christ, and the Gospel once received, is of more dreadfull consequence, than the not receiving of Him, or not reaping any profit by Him at all ; for, having spoken (ver. 2.) of their receiving no advantage by Christ, as one bad consequence of their being circumcised, which was common to them with those who never professed the Name of Christ, he doth here mention their apostasie from Christ and Grace, as another bad consequence, which he reserveth to the last place, as being more formidable than any of the former ; Ye are become separate from Christ, *ye are fallen from Grace.* 3. The Apostle's consequence, whereby he inferreth, that they who seek Justification by Works, are fallen from Grace, doth no wayes prove that the truly Regenerate can really or totally fall from God's grace and favour : for, by *Grace* is meant the doctrine of Grace. Besides, their falling from Grace is only conditional, and suspended upon their seeking Justification

by Works, in which damnable error the truly Regenerate cannot finally, at least, persist, *Mat. 24. -24.* although for a time they may be overtaken with it; *Who soever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace.*

Verf. 5. *For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by Faith.*

HE addeth a fifth Reason, to wit, That *Paul* himself and other Jews who before their conversion to the Christian Faith were circumcised, being now converted and taught by the holy Ghost, did renounce all confidence in their own works or carnal privileges, whether Circumcision or any other, and did look for Heaven (called here *Hope*, because it is the object of our hope, as *Tit. 2. 13.*) only by vertue of that righteousness of Jesus Christ which is laid hold upon by Faith. *Dock. 1.* The riches of a Believer, are not so much in possession, as in expectation and hope; *We wait for the hope*, or, for Heaven hoped for. 2. None have right to Heaven here, or shall enjoy it after this, who are wholly unrighteous, and destitute of all righteousness; for, it is called *the hope of righteousness*, as being attained unto by the Righteous only, and by vertue of their righteousness. 3. No personal righteousness of our own, doth entitle us to this blessed hope and heavenly inheritance, *Tit. 3. 5.* but only the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, *Rom. 5. 19.* and apprehended by Faith, which therefore is called here *Righteousness through Faith*. 4. It is only the inward efficacious teaching of God's Spirit, which can sufficiently instruct us in the knowledge of this imputed righteousness by Faith, and make us with security and confidence venture our eternal well-being, and hope of Heaven upon it: for, saith he, *We through the Spirit*, or being taught by the Spirit of God, *do wait for the hope of righteousness*. 5. The experience and example of other exercised gracious Christians, ought to be of great

great weight to incline our judgment and affections towards an assenting unto, and imbracing of those Truths, from which they have drawn spiritual consolation: for, Paul doth reason, that they ought to receive the doctrine of Justification by Faith, because he himself, and other believing Jews did venture their salvation in that bottom; *For we wait for the hope of righteousness through Faith.* 6. The example of none, though of never so much reputation in the Church, is to be followed as an absolute rule, but in so far only, as their practice is approved by the Spirit of God speaking in Scripture, *Isa. 8. 20.* for, Paul, to make his example a sufficient rule for them to follow, sheweth he did nothing but as he was taught by the Spirit of God; *For we through the Spirit wait,* saith he.

Verf. 6. *For in Jesus Christ, neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith which worketh by love.*

HERE is his sixth Reason, which militates not only against the observing of Circumcision, and those other Levitical Ceremonies, as a part of a mans righteousness before God, but also against the necessity of observing them at all; Because in *Jesus Christ*, or, in the state of the Church under the Gospel after Christ was manifested in the flesh, neither the observing of these things, nor the neglect of them, did commend a man to God, as acceptable service to Him; the service which He now requireth, being only a true lively Faith, evidencing it self to be such by the fruits of a new life, comprehended under the love of God and our neighbour, *Rom. 13. 8.* Doct. 1. Though Circumcision and the rest of those Levitical Ceremonies were once enjoined, and accordingly to be practised as a necessary part of Worship, *Gen. 17. 10, 11.* so that the performance of them in the way required, was service acceptable to God, *Gen. 8. 20, 21.* and the neglect and contempt of them, was in a

high measure detestable, *Exod. 12. 19.* Yet, Christ being come in the flesh, who was the substance of all those shadows, (*Col. 2. 17.*) the command whereby they were enjoined did cease, they remaining for a season chiefly to the Jews, and some of them also to the Gentiles, (*Act. 15. 29.*) in their own nature indifferent, so that the using or not using of them (except in the case of eschewing scandal, *Rom. 14. 21.* and of bearing testimony to the doctrine of christian liberty, *Gal. 2. 3, 4.*) did neither commend a man, nor make him guilty before God: for, saith he, *In Jesus Christ, neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision.* 2. To impose the ty of a Command upon any thing as a necessary part of divine Worship, wherein the Word hath left us free, or to subject our selves to any such Command, is a receding from, and a betraying of that liberty which is purchased unto us by Christ: for, he maketh their receiving of Circumcision as a necessary part of Worship, a receding from this liberty; because now in the dayes of the Gospel there is no command from God to be circumcised: *For in Jesus Christ (saith he) neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision.* 3. The ceremonial Law being abolished under the New Testament, Christians are not left destitute of work, and idle: for, though *in Jesus Christ, neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision*; yet, *Faith, which worketh by love, availeth.* 4. The sum of a Christian man's task now under the Gospel, is the exercise of Faith, which is the great Command of the Gospel, *1 Job. 3. 23.* and of Love, or new obedience; for, Love is the fulfilling of the Law, *Rom. 13. 10.* neither is the use of the Sacraments, and of other pieces of commanded Worship hereby excluded; for they are helps of our Faith, *Rom. 4. 11.* and a part of those duties of love which we owe to God, as being enjoined by the second Command: for, saith he, *in Christ Jesus availeth Faith that worketh by love.* 5. Though Faith only doth justify, there being no other grace which concurrerth with it in this work, *Gal. 2. 16.* Yet, Faith is not alone

in the heart, no not when it doth justifie; but is alwayes accompanied with the grace of Love to God and our neighbour: for, in *Christ Jesus no Faith availeth any thing*, or will be owned by Him as true and saving, but that *which worketh by Love*. 6. Though Faith and Love be alwayes conjoynd; yet, Faith, in order of nature, at least, hath the precedency; it being impossible that we can discharge any duty of Love to God, or our neighbour, sincerely or acceptably, before we close with Christ for the acceptation of our persons by Faith, *Heb. 11. 6.* and thereby draw covenanted furniture from Christ for through-bearing in our duty. *1 Tim. 1. 5.* for, saith he, *Faith worketh by Love*, or is efficacious, and putteth forth its efficacy in Love, as the fruit thereof.

Verf. 7. *Ye did run well, who did binder you, that ye should not obey the Truth?*

HE further presseth the former exhortation indirectly, by four Arguments, first, By commending them for their former forwardnesse in the imbracing of this now controverted Truth (which he calleth their *running well*, or, with a sort of beauty and comlineffe; for so much doth the word signifie) and shewing no satisfying reason could be given for their present defection from it, and from walking according to it. *Doct. 1.* A christian life is like to a course, or race, from Earth to Heaven by the way of Holinesse and all commanded duties, especially the exercise of Faith and Love; and therefore we ought to carry our selves in this way, as those who run in a race (See *Philip. 3. 13. Doct. 4.*) for, the Apostle setteth forth their progresse in Christianity by a metaphor taken from Runners in a race; *Ye did run well.* 2. It is very ordinary for new Converts to be carried-on with a greater measure of affection and zeal, and to make swifter progresse in this christian course, than others, or they themselves afterwards, when they are of older standing; The newnesse of the thing, the first edge which is upon

upon their affections not yet blunted by change of cases, and multiplicity of duties, and Gods restraining for a time the violent assault of multiplied furious tentations, untill they be a little confirmed and engaged in his way, together with His affording a more plentiful measure of His sensible presence at first, than afterwards, do all contribute hereto: for, those Galatians at, and for a season after their first conversion, *did run, and run well.*

3. As those who once made good progresse in the wayes of God may afterward sit up, their after-carriage proving no wayes answerable to their promising beginnings: So, when it falleth thus out, it's matter of a sad regrave unto beholders, and of a deserved reproof unto the persons themselves: for, thus was it with those Galatians, whose defection is matter of astonishment to *Paul*, and of a sad rebuke to them; *Ye did run well, who did binder you?*

4. No satisfying reason can be given, for which any, who once did enter the way of truth and holinesse, should alter his course, take up an halt, or make defection from it, and thereby cause the wayes of God to be evil spoken of, *1 Pet. 2. 2.* for, *Paul's* question, *Who did binder you?* importeth that none in reason could have hindered them.

5. When people fall remisse and lazie in giving obedience to known Truth, they are upon the very brink & precipice of defection unto contrary Error, and of apostasie from the very profession of Truth: for, therefore the Apostle doth challenge them for *not obeying the Truth*, though their apostasie from Truth be mainly intended; implying, that not obedience to Truth, and apostasie from it, are near of kin each to other.

6. The serious consideration of a mans former forwardnesse in the wayes of God, and how little reason can be given for his present backsliding and remissnesse, is a strong incitement to do the first works, and by future diligence to regain what he hath lost by his former negligence: for, the Apostles scope, is, to incite towards a recovery of their lost liberty by the consideration of those two, *Ye did run well, who did binder you?*

Verf. 8. *This perswasion cometh not of Him that calleth you.*

HE preoccupieth an objection ; for, lest haply they had said, They were fully perswaded in their conscience, that the way wherein they now were, was approved of God ; he reponeth, that whatever perswasion they might have of that kind, it was but a meer delusion, as not coming from God, who had called them to christian liberty, ver. 13. but from the Devil and his emissaries. *Doff. 1.* The greatest untruths and foulest errors may be attended, in those who vent them, with no small measure of confidence and perswasion, that they are undoubted Truths : for, *Paul* doth here speak against such a perswasion in those Galatians ; *This perswasion cometh not of Him*, saith he. 2. There is much perswasion and confidence, whereof God is not the author, and especially that, which taketh darknesse for light, and error for truth : this perswasion is not of God, or real, but a strong delusion, arising from arrogancy and self-conceit in the person erring (*2 Tim. 3. 2, 4.* compared with ver. 6.) together with his strong engagements from credit, profit, or some other lust, to follow that error, which do blind the understanding, *2 Tim. 4. 3.* but especially from the powerfull working of Satan, who blindeth the minds of those who believe not the Truth, *2 Cor. 4. 4.* *2 Thess. 2. 9, 10.* for, saith he, *This perswasion cometh not of God.* 3. Whatever perswasion cometh not of God, and is not grounded upon the Word of Truth, is not to be valued, but looked upon as a delusion, with how-much-soever confidence it be vented : for, *Paul* regardeth not their perswasion upon this ground ; *It is not of Him that calleth you*, saith he. 4. This may evidence perswasion or confidence, not to be of God, or real, but a meer delusion, when that thing, the truth or lawfulness whereof we seem to be perswaded of, is contrary unto that which we are called unto of God, by vertue either of our
general

general or particular calling : for, the description here given of God from His calling of them. importeth, their opinion was contrary to that christian liberty, to which they were called of God ; and therefore perswasion about it. was not to be regarded ; *This perswasion cometh not of Him that calleth you*, saith he.

Verf. 9. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.*

HE obviateth a second objection ; for, if they should have said, There was no reason why *Paul* should make so much noise, seeing they had not imbraced the whole Jewish Religion, but did only observe some Ceremonies thereof, and neverthelesse remained constant in the Christian Faith ; yea, and possibly, that even this much was not common to them all, but the deed of some few only. He answereth by a similitude taken from *Leaven*, That a little false doctrine (to which *leaven* is compared, *Mat. 16. 12.*) may easily in progresse of time corrupt a mans judgment in every other point of Doctrine, and that a small number of scandalous or seduced persons, (to whom *leaven* is compared, *1 Cor. 5. 6.*) may very speedily infect the whole Church. *Doff. 1.* When they who are overtaken with sin and error cannot any longer hold off conviction, or defend their practice by strength of reason, it is ordinary for them to mince and extenuate the sin of which they are convinced, and to make but small matters of greatest offences : for, the similitude here used, supposeth there was an aptnesse in them thus to extenuate their error ; *A little leaven*, saith he. 2. It is the duty of Christ's Ministers, not only by force of reason to endeavour a sinners conviction, that his way is sinfull or erroneous, but also to forecast those shifts, whereby the sinner being convinced of his sin or error, may readily go about to extenuate it ; and having found them out, to shew the vanity and lightnesse of them : for, the Apostle doth forecast, that readily they would extenuate their sin from this, that it

was but a little one, and maketh their extenuation to be without ground, shewing that *a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.* 3. The Church of Christ, and every particular member thereof, ought carefully to resist and watch against the very first beginnings and occasions of sin, but especially of error; The Church by labouring authoritatively to convince the gain-sayers, *Tit.* 1. 9. and by timely and prudent application of Church-censures, in case of incorrigible obstinacy, *Tit.* 3. 10. and every particular Christian by labouring to be established and fixed in the Truth, *Col.* 2. 7. lest he be carried about with every wind of doctrine, *Eph.* 4. 14. and by avoiding all unnecessary commerce and fellowship with those who are carried away with a spirit of error, 2 *Job.* 10. for, the least of errors, and the smallest number of seduced persons, are here compared to leaven, a little quantiey whereof doth secretly insinuate it self, and insensibly convey its sournesse unto the whole masse or lump.

Verf. 10. I have confidence in you through the Lord, that you will be none otherwise minded; but be that troubleth you, shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

HE doth indirectly presse the former exhortation, secondly, by shewing his confidence grounded upon charity (*1 Cor.* 13.) that through the Lords gracious working with them, they should be reclaimed from their Error, and made yet again to imbrace the same Truth, which he did preach; But withall, lest from this his charity to them, they should conclude the Error wherein they were, was not very dangerous; therefore he sheweth his just indignation against it, by denouncing deserved wrath and judgment to be inflicted, partly, in this life, partly, in eternal death, against their prime seducers, without any exception, save that of repentance, which is to be understood in all threatnings, *Jer.* 18. 7, 8. *Doff.* 1. A loving Minister, and zealous for the good of souls, when he hath to do with those who are overtaken in a fault,

fault, will of necessity be tossed with the tydes of contrary affections, and, as it were, divided betwixt the exercise of hopes and feares : love in *Paul*, did stir up both those affections, by making him fear the worst of those *Galatians* in the preceding verses, and yet hope the best of them here ; *I have confidence in you through the Lord*, saith he. 2. The Minister of *Jesus Christ* is not to despair of their recovery who do oppose themselves ; but ought in charity to hope the best of all men, so long as they are curable : *I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded*, saith he, which was not a confidence of Faith grounded upon a word of promise, and therefore infallible, but a confidence of charity and love to their good, which made him hope, that God would bring about their deliverance, wherein, though the event should have disappointed him, yet he had not transgressed, seeing that in our judgment of persons, where things are doubtful, we are commanded to hope the best so far as may be, *1 Cor. 13. 7. Doct. 3.* It is convenient also that a Minister sometimes make known unto the people that charitable confidence which he hath of their recovery. The knowledge whereof may not only furnish the people themselves with some heart and courage to set upon their duty arising from their Ministers hopes and confidence, but also commend their duty and make it lovely to them, as being pressed upon them by one, who hath evidenced his love and charity toward them by that his confidence. Besides, it is looked upon as a thing disgracefull, to disappoint those, who from love to, and desire after our good, do hope the best of us : Thus *Paul* maketh them know his confident hope of their recovery ; *I have confidence that you will be none otherwise minded*, saith he. 4. As the sinners first conversion from sin to holiness is God's work, *Eph. 2. 5.* So the recovery of a sinner from his backsliding and defection, is no lesse a work of infinit Power, *Psal. 51. 10.* and the only work of God : for, the Apostle, speaking of his confidence of their recovery, doth rely not upon
their

their strength, but on the Lord for bringing about the thing hoped for ; *I have confidence in you through the Lord*, saith he. 5. A Minister would so make known to people his charitable confidence of their recovery from sin and error, as he may not thereby give them ground to conceive that he is not much displeased with their sin, and so render them secure under it, as making a sleeping pillow of those his hopes : for, the Apostle, having shewen his charitable confidence towards the seduced people, doth evidence how dangerous their error was, notwithstanding, by denouncing Gods judgment against their prime seducers ; *But he that troubleth you, shall bear his judgment*, saith he. 6. How the native and ordinary effect of error is to trouble the Churches peace. See Chap. 1. Vers. 7. Doct. 3. *But he that troubleth you*, 7. Though there were not a Christian Magistrate to inflict civil punishment upon seducers, and those, who by drawing disciples after them do trouble the Churches peace, or, though the Christian Magistrate do not make conscience of that, which is his duty herein, *Rom. 13. -4.* yet, such evil doers as those may certainly expect their deserved judgment from God, either here, or hereafter to be inflicted, either immediately by Himself, *Zech. 10. 7.* or mediately by some one instrument or other, *Zech. 13. 3.* for, though there was now no Christian Magistrate to punish such ; yet Paul with much confidence affirmeth, *He that troubleth you, shall bear his judgment*. 8. So just is God, that when He maketh inquisition for blood in His day of vengeance, He will suffer no impenitent transgressor, how subtil soever, escape His most accurate search, nor yet passe free from the dint of His avenging stroke, who-ever he be for parts, power, or estimation : for, he speaketh in the singular number, *he that troubleth you*, to shew, that every one, and, as it were, apart, and one by one, should be taken notice of, and *shall bear his judgment, whoever he be*, that is, without exception of persons.

Verf. 11. *And I, Brethren, if I yet preach Circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the crosse ceased.*

HE presseth the exhortation, thirdly, by refuting a calumny, whereby, as it seemeth, his adversaries would have made people believe, that *Paul*, by circumcising *Timothy*, to prevent the stumbling of the weak Jews (*Act. 16. 3.*) had declared himself to be of the same judgment with them in the present controversie. And he answereth, denying that he did urge Circumcision to be observed by the Gentiles at all, (*Act. 21. 25.*) nor yet by the Jews in the sense of his adversaries, and giveth two evidences of the truth of his denial; First, if he had preached Circumcision, the Jews would not have persecuted him, as they constantly did. Secondly, they would not have taken offence at the preaching of the Gospel, or of Salvation through Christ crucified, which is here called the *Crosse*, or doctrine of the Crosse, as *1 Cor. 1. 18.* The truth of both which consequences lyeth in this, that the great reason why the Jews did persecute the Apostle, and were such enemies to his doctrine, was his preaching down of Circumcision, and the whole frame of that ancient legal administration, under which they were born and educated, *Act. 21. 28.* *Dott. 1.* It is the ordinary lot of faithfull Ministers, to be subject unto slander and reproaches, not only in respect of their lives, *Rom. 3. 8.* but also in respect of their Ministry and Doctrine, as if they were Hereticks: for, even *Paul* is reported of as a preacher of Circumcision, which is supposed, while he saith, *If I yet preach Circumcision.* 2. So active are heretical seducers, as they leave no mean unessayed which may serve to confirm and establish their seduced followers, if it were even to spread reports of their chiefest opposits, that they are secretly and under-hand of the same opinion with themselves, and that sometimes they declare their judgments to that purpose: for, so did they
report

report of *Paul*, as is here supposed; *If I yet preach Circumcision.* 3. The faithfull Minister of *Jesus Christ*, though he be maliciously and basely reported of, ought not to render evil for evil unto those who have invented or entertained such reports, but to return love for their hatred, and good for their evil, labouring more to vindicate himself, than to rub disgrace upon them, whereby he shall heap coals of fire upon their head, *Rom. 12. 20.* for, so doth *Paul*, while he laboureth only to clear himself to those *Galatians*, among whom he was misreported of, giving them the affectionate stile of Brethren; *And I, Brethren, if I yet preach Circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution?* 4. While we labour to clear our selves from false imputations or calumnies, we had need to use much circumspection in declaring the matter of fact, lest we fail in any one circumstance, and so be found lyars, while we go about to justify our selves; for, *Paul* is thus circumspect while he denyeth not that he did circumcise any (for he circumcised *Timothy*, *Act. 16. 3.*) or that he did ever preach Circumcision (for he did so while he was a Pharisee, *Gal. 1. 13, 14.*) but that he did preach the observing of it now as a thing necessary to salvation; *If I yet preach Circumcision*, saith he. 5. A faithfull Minister neither ought, nor will conceal any part of necessary Truth, which he is otherwise called to preach, though he certainly know, he will incur hazard, losse and persecution from men because of it: for, *Paul* knew he was persecuted by the Jews for his preaching against Circumcision, and yet he preacheth; *Why do I yet suffer persecution?* 6. Neither is he to conceal any part of necessary Truth, when the eminent hazard of peoples salvation calleth for the preaching of it, though imbittered enemies should take occasion from his preaching of that one Truth to reject all Truth: for, *Paul* preacheth down Circumcision, though the Jews did take occasion from his so doing to reject the whole Gospel: for, saith he, *Then*, to wit, if he had preached Circumcision, the offence of the Crosse is ceased. 7. If men

once place Religion and Worship in rites, ceremonies, and such externall observances, the most substantial Truths of God and duties of Christianity, will not bear so much weight with them in progresse of time as the meanest of those: for, though *Paul* did preach Christ sincerely, *1 Cor.* 1. 23. and urged obedience to all the duties of the Moral Law, *Rom.* 13. 8, 9. yet, seeing he did not preach Circumcision he was persecuted by the Jews, who placed Religion in such external performances: Yea, they reject and stumble at the doctrine of Salvation preached by him, because he would not preach Circumcision also; *Why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offense of the Crosse ceased:* which implyeth, that his not preaching Circumcision, was the cause why they persecuted his person, and stumbled at his doctrine.

Verf. 12. I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

HE preſſeth the exhortation, fourthly, by a wish that their prime seducers, who troubled their outward and inward peace, were cut off from communion with the Church, by the sword of Excommunication: whereby he sheweth both, that their sin deserved to be so censured, and that the good of the Church, if her present distemper could have borne it, did require that this censure had been inflicted. *Doct. 1.* The Lord Christ, King and Head of His Church, hath placed power and authority in the Church-guides (*Job.* 20. 23.) being conveened together (*1 Cor.* 5. 4.) to cut off from the body of the Church, by the sword of Excommunication, incorrigible and obstinate offenders, for the destruction of the flesh, that their spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, and that the Church be not infected by the contagion of their sin, *1 Cor.* 5. 5, 6. for, by this cutting off, is meant Excommunication, as the similitude of leaven (*ver. 9.*) doth teach, being compared with *1 Cor.* 5. 6. in which chapter Excommunication is spoken of, and the Apostle alludeth to that phrase of *cutting off from Gods*

Gods People, frequently used in the Old Testament, as *Gen. 17. 14.* which did expresse the censure of Excommunication then in use among the Jews; and the Apostle's wishing, that they were even cut off who troubled them, supposeth that there was power to cut off such in the Church, if the exercise of that power had been seasonable; *I would they were even cut off.* 2. The spirit of Error may so far prevail among a People, that the exercise of discipline can hardly attain its end amongst them, to wit, the shaming of the person censured (*1 Cor. 5. 5.*) and the preservation of the Church from being leavened, *1 Cor. 5. 6.* In which case the Servants of Christ would proceed with a slow pace, and in all lenity and wisdom to the inflicting of Church-censures, lest the person censured, and the multitude seduced by him, be thereby hardened, and the Ordinance it self exposed to contempt; and therefore would rather doctrinally declare, what censures such persons deserve, than actually inflict the censure it self: for, though *Paul* by himself alone, had power to cut off and excommunicate, *1 Tim. 1. 20.* yet, the infection had so spread it self in this Church, and the general distemper was so great, that he satisfieth himself with a wish, declaring thereby what their sin deserved, and proceedeth no further; *I would they were even cut off,* saith he.

Verf. 13. *For, Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*

THe second part of the chapter beginneth in this verse, wherein the Apostle, having given a reason of his former wish, ver. 12. (even because those seducers did hinder the course of their vocation, burdening them with the observances of such things as are contrary to Evangelical liberty, to the enjoyment whereof they were called by God) he exhorteth them to take heed of running to the other extreame of abusing their Christian liberty,

as if they were thereby freed from all obligation to serve God or man in any thing, and giveth two Rules to direct them in the right use of their liberty, first, *They would not use their liberty for an occasion to the flesh*; where, by *flesh* is not meant the substance of our fleshly bodies, but the power of sin and corruption which is in every man, *Eph. 2. 3.* and is seated not only in our carnall fleshly appetite, but in all the powers of the soul, even the understanding (*Rom. 8. 7.*) and will, or rational appetite, (*Col. 2. -18.*) not being excepted. So the sense of the Rule prescribed, is, That they would not take encouragement from this doctrine of Christian liberty to give licence unto the power of sin and corruption within them to break all bonds, and to fulfill its own lusts. Secondly, That they would *by love serve one another*; or, that notwithstanding of this purchased liberty, every one without exception of persons would from the fountain of love employ himself in all the duties of love for bringing about the good of his neighbour, and by consequence would straiten, or enlarge himself in the use of his liberty, as might be most conducing to his neighbours spiritual edification, *Rom. 14. 13, 15. 1 Cor. 8. 9. Doct. 1.* There is not any one thing which ought to be more desired and endeavoured by an honest Minister, than that the People of God committed to his charge, do in some measure walk answerably to their christian calling, and nothing ought to stir up his zeal and indignation more, than when they either actually walk, or are tempted to walk in a course contrary unto it: for, thereby they not only mar the fruits of the Gospel to themselves, (see ver. 4.) but also cause it to be evil spoken of by others, *1 Tim. 5. 14.* Hence is the Apostle's zeal so hot against the false Apostles, as that he wisheth them to be cut off, even because they tempted those Galatians to undergo a yoke of servitude contrary to that state of liberty, unto which they were called; *For, Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty*, saith he. 2. Such is the power and subtilty of inbred corruption, as that it perverteth
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the nature even of those things which are best, and taketh occasion from them to do wickedly: for, there is hazard, lest occasion be taken by corrupt nature, even from the doctrine of christian liberty, to break all bonds, and to become licentious, as is supposed, while he saith, *Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh.* 3. The Minister of Jesus Christ ought with great circumspection to guard and cautionate the Truth delivered by him, and especially such Truths, as not being sufficiently guarded may readily be mistaken, and made use of for the encouragement of corrupt nature in any vice or error: for, such was this doctrine of christian liberty, and therefore the Apostle doth seasonably guard it, *Only, saith he, use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh.* 4. That our christian liberty purchased by Christ, may be used aright, it is required that we do not abuse it as an occasion of fleshly liberty, whether, first, by making those things indifferent and free, which God hath not made free, as the Gentiles did fornication, *1 Cor. 6. ver. 12, &c.* Or, secondly, by the immoderate and excessive use of things in their own nature indifferent, as of meat, drink, apparel, which is frequently condemned, See *Rom. 13. 13.* for, the Apostle prescribeth this as one rule for the right use-making of christian liberty; *Only use not liberty for an occasion of the flesh.* 5. It is not sufficient for the right use-making of christian liberty, that we do not from thence take occasion to sin our selves, but we must also labour carefully to guard, lest by the offensive and indiscreet use of liberty we give offence, and minister occasion of sin and stumbling unto others: for, he prescribeth this as a second rule, that in the use of their liberty they would *by love serve one another*, having an eye especially upon their neighbours spiritual edification, *Rom. 14. 13, 15. Doct. 6.* This freedom and liberty purchased by Christ, doth not loose the ty of any necessary duty, which we are under, whether to God or man. The yoke of duty is no wayes repugnant unto, but very consistent with christian liberty: for, the Apostle, having at large

exhorted them to stand to this liberty, he subjoyneth, *by love serve one another.* 7. Though Christianity doth not abolish the civil distinction of masters and servants, *Eph. 6. 5, 9.* And though all Christians be in some respects the Lords free-men, *1 Cor. 7. 22.* yet, they are all (even the greatest not being excepted) mutually servants one to another, in so far as being fellow-members of one body, (*1 Cor. 12. 27.*) they ought not to live unto themselves only, but to spend themselves in their respective employments, for the spiritual and civil advantage of the whole body, and of every particular member thereof, so far as their capacity and calling (*2 Cor. 8. 12, 13.*) do reach; for, the Apostle enjoyneth unto all without exception, *serve one another.* 8. It is not sufficient we do those things which are in themselves materially good, or conducing to our neighbours profit and advantage, except what is done of that kind do flow from the fountain of christian love towards him, *1 Cor. 13. 2.* for, saith he, *serve one another by love.* 9. There is no duty so onerous in it self, or so far below us in our esteem, but the grace of love, being lively in the heart, will make us pleasantly stoop unto it, if it were even to serve the meanest person in the world: for, he commandeth all, even the greatest, to *serve one another by love*; importing, where love is not, this service will hardly be undergon, and that love will make it easie.

Verf. 14. *For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.*

HE inforceth the last Rule by two Reasons, first, This serving one another by love, is the most compendious way to keep the whole Law, seeing the whole Law is summed up in that one Word or Precept, (for the ten Precepts of the Law are called so many Words, *Exod. 34. 27.*) of loving our neighbour (that is, every one without exception, to whom we have any opportunity offered of doing good, *Luke 10. 36, 37.*) and that, with as much sincerity

sincerity as we do our selves : Now, love to our neighbour, is called the fulfilling of the Law, not, as if love to God were not thereby commanded also, *Mat. 22. 37.* but because love to our neighbour supposeth love to God, and floweth from it, as a stream from the fountain, *1 Job. 5. 1.* and is an evidence of it, *1 Job. 4. 21. Doct. 1.* Though Believers in Jesus Christ be delivered from the condemning sentence of the Law, *Rom. 8. 1.* yet, not from the directing power thereof. The Law doth alwayes remain a rule of our new obedience, though it cease from being a Judge either to justifie, or condemn us : for, the Apostle inforceth the duty of love from the authority of the Law, which doth enjoin it ; for, *all the Law is fulfilled in one word, &c.* saith he. 2. Love to our neighbour is a most comprehensive duty, as comprising not only inward affection, but also outward action, and extending it self to all the duties both positive and negative, which are enjoined by the whole second Table ; (*See Mat. 22. 39.*) *love thy neighbour as thy self.* 3. There is not any of whatsoever rank or condition, whether friend or foe, (*Mat. 5. 44.*) to whom we do not owe the affection of love, and the conscientious discharge of all those duties, which are commanded in the second Table ; for, we are commanded *to love our neighbour,* (that is, as Christ explaineth, *Luke 10. 36, 37.*) every man as opportunity doth offer. 4. As the Precepts of the second Table do enjoin every man to love, and go about all other commanded duties towards his neighbour ; so also towards himself : for, although that inordinate and excessive love to *self* (which is in every man by nature, and whereby a man doth so love himself, as that he postponeth Gods glory and his neighbours good to the fulfilling of his own fleshly lusts) be no-where commanded, but expressly guarded against, *Mat. 10. 39.* Yet, there is a lawfull orderly love to *self*, which is enjoined unto every man : so as that by all lawfull means he labour to maintain what honour God hath put upon himself according to the fifth Command,

and to preserve his own life according to the sixth Command, and so forth of the rest : for, the Command to *love our neighbour as our self*, supposeth we ought to love our self, to wit, with subordination to God. 5. The love, and other duties flowing from love, which every man is to carry unto, and to discharge towards himself in subordination to God, have the force of a rule and measure unto that love which we owe unto others, so as that we are to love them, first, for God and His Command, *1 Job. 4. 21.* Secondly, in subordination to God, *Mat. 10. 37.* Thirdly, in sincerity, there being both affection, and action flowing from affection in our love to Him, *1 Job. 3. 18.* for, so we do, and ought to love our selves; Now the Law commandeth *to love our neighbour as our selves.*

Verf. 15. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

HERE is a second argument, to inforce the exercise of mutual love, taken from some dangerous effects, which, doubtlesse, had already followed in part among those Galatians, occasioned by their debates and controversies, and would yet follow more upon the want of love, to wit, first, Their bitter strifes, backbitings, railings, and reproaches, set forth by the biting of wilde beasts; And, secondly, other real injuries, by fraud or violence, which seem to be pointed at, by *devouring*, which is more than biting : And lastly, as a consequence of the two former, a total vastation and consumption of the whole Church. *Doct. 1.* As it is a matter of no small difficulty to entertain love among the members of a Church, when they are divided in opinion and judgment about religious Truths; So where love groweth cold, Church-divisions have ordinarily sad and scandalous effects, which argue little of a tender frame of heart in those who have them, even such as are here mentioned, *biting, and devouring one another.* 2. However a
sectarian

sectarian spirit doth ordinarily pretend to much sobriety and meeknesse, especially when it first appeareth, and hath but few to give it any countenance, *Rom. 16. 18.* yet, so soon as it hath gathered strength, and gained many followers, it hath been alwayes found most bitter and cruel: for, the effects of this renting schismatick spirit among those Galatians, were no lesse than *biting and devouring one another.* 3. In time of Church-divisions, though that party which is for truth and piety be alwayes the most sober, *Jude v. 20, 21.* yet, considering that even they have much unmortified corruption apt to be provoked by the insolency of their schismatick adversaries, there is no small hazard, lest even they vent much of fleshly zeal and passion, and while they are defending Truth, become guilty of several miscarriages, and so be rendred much the worse of their contests and divisions: for, the sin which he doth partly reprove, and partly guard against, was mutual, and of both parties; *If ye bite and devour one another, saith he.* 4. When schism in a Church is not only maintained on the one hand with fleshly passion, strife, reproaches, and other real injuries, but when it is also oppugned upon the other hand, not so much with the sword of the Spirit the Word of Truth, as with the same fleshly and sinfull means, Then especially is schism the fore-runner and procuring cause of desolation and ruine to both parties, and to the whole Church; and this not only because of that heinous guilt which is in it, but also that stumbling-blocks are thereby multiplied, which cannot but prevail mightily to make men doubt of all Truth, and in end prove nulli-fidians: for, the Apostle holdeth this forth as the consequence of their biting and devouring one another, *Take heed, saith he, lest ye be destroyed one of another.* 5. As it is a matter of great difficulty to make men of credit and parts, being once engaged in their contentious debates, to project the consequences of their so doing further than the hoped-for victory against their contrary party, *Alt. 15. 37, &c.* So it were no small wisdom, before folk meddle with
strife,

strife, so as to engage their fleshly passions in it, however they may be otherwise provoked; seriously to project and consider what wofull, sad and dangerous effects may follow thereupon to the Church of God: for, saith he, *Take heed, lest ye be destroyed one of another.*

Verf. 16. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

HE returneth to the first Rule given, *ver. 13.* (to wit, That they would not use their liberty for an occasion to the flesh) by a transition usuall unto him when he is further to insist upon any thing formerly spoken (*See chap. 4. ver. 1.*) and furnisheth them with an help for reducing that Rule unto practice, to wit, *Walking in the Spirit*, or following the motions and directions of the renewed part, or new-man of Grace in the heart (for which the word *Spirit*, when it is opposed to flesh, is usually taken, *See Joh. 3. 6.*) the fruit of their walking thus he sheweth should be their mortifying, and keeping at under the flesh, or their corrupt and unrenewed part, in so far, as though the lusts, or first inordinate motions of inbred corruption (for so is *lust* taken in the tenth Commandment) would not be totally suppressed, yet they should not be fulfilled, or brought unto the compleat act, with deliberation and consent, which doth more fully speak that which is, *ver. 13.* concerning their not using liberty for an occasion to the flesh. *Doct. 1.* There is not any possibility of getting the power of inbred corruption subdued, or the lusts of sinfull flesh curbed to any saving purpose by a natural man, or by any man without a work of saving Grace wrought in his heart by the Spirit of God: for he prescribeth unto them *walking in the Spirit*, as the only remedy against *fulfilling the lusts of the flesh*, which supposeth that the *Spirit*, or the work of saving Grace and Regeneration wrought by the Spirit, must be first in them. *a.* The prevailing of corruption over Christians, even to the accomplishing of the outward acts thereof after deliberation

liberation (which sometimes hath come to passe, as in David and others) doth not prove that they never had a work of Grace, or that they have totally fallen from it, but only that they walk not in the Spirit ; the motions and directions of the renewed part are not obeyed, but quenched ; the power whereof, wherewith the renewed faculties are endued is not exercised, and hereby God is provoked to withdraw His actuating Grace, so that our lusts, once in part mortified, cannot but gather strength, and range abroad in the soul without any effectual resistance : for, *Paul saith not, if ye have the Spirit, but if ye walk in the Spirit, ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.*

3. The sin of lust and covetousnesse, as it speaketh the first motions of corruption, whether in our understanding, will, or sensual appetite, towards unlawfull and forbidden objects, namely, such motions as are sudden, and run before our deliberate consent, they cannot be wholly abandoned by the child of God in this life, no nor, though he use the utmost of diligence and watchfulness : for, upon their walking in the Spirit, he doth not promise that those lusts shall not be in them ; only, *they shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.*

4. It is a Minister's duty to insist so far upon any point of necessary Truth, untill he make it, so far as he is able, sufficiently plain according to the capacity of the hearers, as also if the Truth in hand contain a practical duty, the practice whereof is attended with many difficulties, he is to insist upon it until he furnish the hearers with some pertinent helps and motives unto that duty : for, so doth *Paul insist upon that Truth delivered, ver. 13. This I say then ;* and by insisting doth explain it, *ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh ;* and furnisheth them with an help how it shall be practised, *Walk in the Spirit,* saith he.

Verſ. 17. *For the fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to the other: ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

HE proveth that their following the motions of the renewed part, ſhould keep the unrenewed part at under, by two arguments; firſt, Becauſe the renewed, and unrenewed part, or *Spirit* and *Fleſh*, do luſt againſt, unceſſantly oppoſe and labour to ſuppreſſe one another, by reaſon of that great contrariety, which is betwixt thoſe two principles, as being of a different original, *Joh. 3. 6.* and ſupported and aſſiſted with contrary powers, *ver. 19. and 22.* whence he ſheweth it doth follow, that we cannot compleatly effectuate neither the good nor the evil which we would; the *fleſh* alwayes oppoſing that which we would according to the direction of the *Spirit*; the *Spirit* again oppoſing what we would according to the direction of the *fleſh*: which latter is the concluſion he doth here prove, as it is expreſſed, *ver. 16.*

Deff. 1. As a Miniſter ought to point at ſome helps unto the People for their better diſcharging of any difficult duty; So he ought to make it appear that thoſe are helps indeed, and how they contribute for the more eaſie practiſing of the duty preſſed; otherwiſe they receive no encouragement thereby, neither to ſet about the duty, nor to make uſe of thoſe helps in order to the duty: for, the Apoſtle having preſcribed an help for keeping the *fleſh* at under, doth here demonſtrate clearly, that the thing preſcribed doth really help, as appeareth from the ſcope. 2. As the regenerate man hath a renewed principle of Grace in all the faculties and powers of the ſoul, wrought in him by the Spirit of God; So he hath in all thoſe ſome remainder of corruption yet unmortified, whereby his whole mind, will and affections are partly ſpiritual, partly carnal, both *fleſh* and *Spirit* are in him; *For the fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit,* ſaith he. 3. None of thoſe powers or principles in the regenerate man, are dead,

dead, dull, or meerly passive, but both of them are working and active; for, *the flesh lusteth*, and *the Spirit lusteth*, whereby is meant, that both of them do sway and incline the whole man to work in a way congruous to their respective natures, the one to good, and the other to evil. 4. The activity of these two active principles is in a flat opposition the one to the other; so that in one and the same man, and while he is about one and the same action, there is a conflict and battel betwixt these two contrary parties, Rom. 7. 19, 21. *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.* 5. As there is a mixture of both these principles in all the powers and faculties of the regenerate man; So there is a mixture of their respective influence and efficacy in every action of his, whereby, though there be a prevalency of the one above the other in some actions; yet there is not one action to which both of them do not contribute somewhat: if not by a causal influence; yet by some measure of active resistance; For *the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.* 6. Hence it followeth, that as the actions of the regenerate are not perfect and free from a sinful mixture; So there is some difference betwixt his worst actions, and those same actions as gone about by the unregenerate man, even this, that the flesh doth not advance with a full gale, but meeteth with the contrary tyde of resistance from the Spirit in some degree: for, as *the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, so the Spirit lusteth against the flesh: and ye cannot do the thing that ye would*, saith he. 7. Though unregenerate men may have somewhat like to this spiritual combat, even a conflict sometimes betwixt the natural conscience, and rebellious affections, Rom. 2. 1. yet they have not this same very combat here spoken of, wherein one faculty is not carried against the other, but every faculty, as it is *flesh*, is carried against it self, as it is *spirit*; now that this combat is not in the unregenerate man, appeareth from this, that he is wholly *flesh*, Gen. 6. 5. and not at all *spirit*. And this combat is betwixt *flesh* and *spirit*; for, *the flesh lusteth*

lusts against the spirit. 3. The mutual resistance and opposition of those two parties, *flesh* and *spirit*, in the regenerate man, as it beginneth at the very first rise of every action in the understanding, will, or affections; So it continueth and waxeth alwayes more fierce, as the action is carried on towards its full accomplishment by the executive faculties: for, saith he, *Ye cannot do all things that ye would*; importing, that our willing of good or evil, is more free from this opposition (though not altogether free) than our actual doing or accomplishing of it, being so willed. See *Rom. 7. 18.*

Verf. 18. *But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the Law.*

HE proveth the same conclusion, secondly, shewing that they who are led and guided by the regenerate part, or an inward principle of grace within (which is all one with *walking in the Spirit*, spoken of, ver. 16.) are *not under the Law*, whereby is not meant, that they are not under the Law as a rule and guide of new obedience; for, both the Word and the Spirit do guide; as shall appear from the first Doctrine; but they are not under the condemning (*Rom. 8. 1.*) nor yet the irritating power of the Law, whereby the more that unregenerate men are urged unto rigid obedience by the Law, the more doth their corrupt nature spurn and rebell, as being desperate to get all done which the Law enjoyneth. This irritating power of the Law is spoken of, *Rom. 7. 5.* Now, they who are led by the Spirit, are not thus under the Law, because unto such a fountain of Grace is opened-up for enabling them in some measure to do what the Law enjoyneth, *Phil. 4. 13.* and for pardoning them wherein they fall short, *1 Job. 2. 1, 2.* So that corruption in them is not so much irritated by the Law as in the unregenerate, and by consequence the lusts of the flesh are not fulfilled, as was expressed, ver. 16. *Doct. 1.* The regenerate part, or new man of Grace, performeth the office of
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guide and leader to the godly in all their actions which are truly spiritual. In so far as first, it self is ruled by the Word, and to be tryed by the Word, *Iſa.* 8. 20. which Word alone is the external light and lanthorn to direct our steps, *Pſal.* 119. 105. as the light of the Sun or candle is to the eye. Secondly, the work of Grace it self, as the understanding is thereby illightned, is the internal light whereby the regenerate man doth spiritually understand the things of God revealed in Scripture, *1 Cor.* 2. 12. as by the internal light of the eye we discern those things which are made conspicuous by the external light of the Sun or candle. Thirdly, the same work of Grace, as the will and affections are thereby renewed, being actuated by the continual supply of exciting grace from the Spirit of the Lord, is a strengthening guide to all spiritual actions, by whose influence alone the regenerate man (who as to any principle of nature and free-will within himself is not sufficient to think any thing, *2 Cor.* 3. 5.) is rendred able, and made actually to walk in the wayes of God, *Philip.* 2. 13. for, while he saith, *If ye be led by the Spirit,* he supposeth the office of the Spirit, and regenerate part is to guide and lead. 2. The natural man, so long as he remaineth in that state, is so much a slave to his sinful lusts. That those things which are appointed of God to curb and make them weaker, are so far from bringing about the end proposed, that his lusts are thereby enraged and made more violent; for, the Apostle (being to prove that those who are led by the Spirit do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; which is laid down to be proved, ver. 16.) saith, *such are not under the Law,* to wit, the strict and rigid exaction of the Law; importing that the rigidity of the Law, which of its own nature tendeth to restrain sin, and to make it weaker, is turned by the unregenerate man unto an occasion for the fulfilling of his lusts.

Ver. 19. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, *Adultery*, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20. *Idolatry*, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21. *Envyings*, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

FOR the better understanding and observing of the rule delivered, ver. 13. *use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh*, he maketh a Catalogue of some works of the flesh, which were best known to those Galatians: And, first, he declareth the nature & condition of those works, that though the inward root of concupiscence from whence they flow, be hid; and therefore it is not easie to convince a man that he is led by it; yet those effects and works of the flesh are evident and patent, so that a man may passe judgment upon the prevalency of flesh and concupiscence in his heart, when those its effects do break out in his life. Secondly, he maketh a particular enumeration of seventeen of those works, expressly shewing that there are several other works of the flesh besides these, only he thinketh it sufficient to have instanced these, and these rather than others, because probably they have been too commonly practised among the Galatians: which works of the flesh here enumerated, are, First, *Adultery*, or the sin of filchynesse betwixt parties, whereof one at least is married. Secondly, *Fornication*, or the sin of filchynesse betwixt parties both free from the yoke of marriage. Thirdly, *Uncleanness*, under which are usually comprehended all other sorts of filthy lusts, and particularly that against nature, *Rom. 1. 24.* Fourthly, *Lasciviousness*, or wantonness, whereby is meant all petulant and wanton behaviour, tending to excite the lust of filchynesse, whether in our selves or others. These are, ver. 19. Fifthly, *Idolatry*, a sin whereby religious worship;

worship, due to God only (*Mat. 4. 10.*) is given unto those which by nature are no gods, chap. 4. 9. or, whereby the true God is worshiped in, or before Images, *Exod. 32. 4. 5.* The former idolatry is forbidden in the first Command, the latter in the second. Sixthly, *Witchcraft*, or a devilish art, whereby certain men or women, having under some violent fit of a temptation entered a covenant, either expresse or implicite, with the Devil, are enabled by the Devil's assistance upon their using certain rites and ceremonies prescribed by him, to work things strange and wonderfull, so far as God permitteth. Seventhly, *Hatred*, or, as the word signifieth, enmity and hatred in the heart towards our neighbour, joyned with a rooted desire to do him hurt, whether for apprehended or real injuries. Eighthly, *Variance*, or contention and strife by disgraceful and opprobrious words, arising from the fore-mentioned enmity and alienation of hearts. Ninthly, *Emulations*, not that good emulation whereby we strive to excell others in that which is good, not for love of applause or other by-respects, but meerly from the love which we carry unto that which is good; this is commanded, *1 Cor. 14. 12.* but carnal emulations, whereby we are grieved at the good which is in others, not so much from hatred to their good, as because it overshadoweth us, and therefore is joyned with a desire to outstrip them in that good, which we are grieved for, wherein it differeth from *envy*. Tenthly, *Wrath*, whereby, according to the force of the word in the original, is meant that sudden passionate commotion, and perturbation of the affections, through apprehension of an injury offered, transforming a man to a very beast, and thrusting him forward to act some mischief, *Luke 4. 28, 29.* Eleventhly, *Strife*, which, as it differeth from the eight work of the flesh formerly mentioned, doth signify a certain kind of litigious striving, probably about civil rights and interests, which, when it is for trifling matters, or in defence of unrighteousnesse, (*1 Cor. 6. 8.*) or separated from a spirit of Christian meeknesse and

condescendence (1 Cor. 6. 7.) is a work of the flesh here condemned. Twelfthly, *Seditions*, or renting of those into divers factions, who ought to be joyned in one common society: (for so much the word in the Original doth hint at) which renting work, when it falleth out in the State, is called by the name of *sedition*, and in the Church by the name of *schism*, especially when there is a rent not only in opinion, but also in affection and design or endeavour, each party labouring to countermine the other. Thirteenthly, *Heresses*, which are somewhat more than simple schism and faction, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 19. even grosse and dangerous errors voluntarily held (*Tit. 3. 11.*) and factiously maintained by some person or persons within the visible Church (*Act. 20. 30.*) in opposition to some chief or substantial Truths grounded upon, and drawn from the holy Scripture, as the places cited, and the notation of the word in the Original will in a good part bear. These are, ver. 20. Fourteenthly, *Envyings*, which are those base passions, whereby we grieve at the good and prosperity of others, without any endeavour to attain unto that good our selves. Fifteenthly, *Murders*, or slaughters, which frequently follow upon the former, whereby is not meant the execution of publick justice upon malefactors; for, that is commanded *Lev. 24. 21.* but the satisfaction of private revenge, by shedding of blood, and the taking away of our neighbour's life unjustly, though under pretence of publick justice, 1 King. 21. 13. Sixteenthly, *Drunkennesse*, when men do drink wine, or strong drink excessively, and beyond that measure which fitteth them both in soul and body for the service of God, and duties of their calling. Seventeenthly, *Revellings*, The word doth usually signifie excess of belly-cheer in riotous feasts, joyned with all sorts of lascivious behaviour. The Apostle, having made this enumeration, that he might terrifie them from the practice of those evils, giveth them timous warning now by Letter, as he had done formerly by Preaching when he was with them, that impenitent persisters in these

these and such like sins, should never inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, and by consequence should be eternally damned, *Mat. 25. 41.* I say, impenitent persisters; for, this and all such threatnings are to be understood with the exception of repentance, *Jer. 18. 7. 8.* *Dott. 1.* It is not sufficient that a Minister, having divided his hearers in two ranks, to wit, spiritual and carnal, or renewed and unrenewed, denounce eternal wrath to the latter, and promise God's favour and life eternal to the former; but it is also necessary, that he give evident and discriminating marks of both, and of the one from the other, whereby every one may be in some measure enabled without mistake to judge of his own inward estate, and so to know whether the judgment denounced, or mercy promised, be his allotted portion: for, the Apostle giveth such discriminating marks of *flesh* and *Spirit*, from their respective effects; *The works of the flesh are manifest*, saith he; and, ver. 22. *the fruit of the Spirit is love.* 2. As it is not sufficient for a Minister to condemn and reprove sin in the general, without condescending upon some particular instances and examples; because general doctrine is not so well understood, and especially in the reproof of sin, it is looked upon almost by every hearer as if he himself were not concerned in it: So in the matter of instances and examples (because he cannot, neither were it convenient to enumerate all) such would be condescended upon as are best known, and most commonly practised among those to whom he preacheth: for, the Apostle giveth such instances of the works of the flesh, as for the most part, the present defection, schism and distemper flowing from thence, which was among those Galatians, did carry them unto *Idolatry, heresse, variance, strife, &c.* and, as it seemeth, all the rest have been but too commonly practised amongst them, as *adultery, fornication, &c.* 3. Sin hath seated it self, not only in the sensual appetite, but in the more noble faculties of the soul also, namely our understanding and will; so that the whole man is corrupted by nature, and altogether *flesh*;

for, the works of the *flesh* here enumerated are of three sorts, according to those three parts of corrupt flesh, or nature, to wit, our reason, will, and sensual appetite: So as some of them are seated in, and have their rise from each of those; the four first, *Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and wantonness*, and the two last, belong to the sensual appetite, *Idolatry* and *heresie* to blind and corrupt reason; *Witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, envyings, murders*, belong partly to the depraved will, and partly to the sensual appetite. 4. Not only are grossly scandalous evils, works of the flesh, excluding those who are guilty from the Kingdom of Heaven, such as *Adultery, witchcraft, &c.* but also such sins, as being seated in the heart, do not break forth to the view of the world, of which sort are *hatred, emulation, envyings*: for, *even they that do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* 5. There is no sin so grosse, as being against all piety, conscience, and the very light of nature it self, which people have not need to guard against, and Ministers to deter them from by the terrible denunciations of God's heavy judgement against those, who shall be found guilty of such like; And that because the seed of all sin is in every man, *Rom. 3. 10, &c.* And there is no sin, into which a man given over of God will not fall, when he is tempted to it, *Exod. 10. 27.* for, the Apostle thinketh it necessary to scar them even from *Adultery, witchcraft* and *murder*, by shewing that *they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* 6. That a Minister may bear down and suppress sin amongst the people committed to his charge to any purpose, it is necessary he inveigh by just and necessary reproof, not only against the grosse and external acts of sin and wickedness, but also against the first motions and conception of those sins in the heart, and every thing which may prove an occasion of breaking forth in those grosser evils; for, the Apostle setteth forth the evil not only of *Adultery, fornication* and *uncleanness*, but also of *wantonness*; not only of *witchcraft*, but also of *hatred* and *variance*, which

often

often prove tentations unto *Witchcraft*; and not only of murders, but also of *Wrath*, *envyings*, *emulations*, *strife*: all which make way for murders. 7. Ministers are God's watchmen, *Ezek. 3. 17.* and therefore are bound to give faithfull and timous warning unto every man of his spiritual hazard; lest otherwile the blood of people be required at his hands; This made *Paul* often to forewarn both presently, and in time past, that they *who do those things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* 8. Though former warnings have not the expected successe; yet, the Minister of Christ, must not faint nor despair, as if there were no hope; but ought to renew his zeal, and reiterate those very same warnings and threatnings, as not knowing when the Lord may give the long-wished-for blessing, *2 Tim. 2. 25.* Thus did *Paul*; *Of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past.* 9. As life eternal and the state of glory to be enjoyed after this, is a *Kingdom*, because there shall be an order betwixt King and subject there, the one commanding, the other obeying, without any hazard of rebellion and faction, *Mat. 6. -10.* There shall be perfect freedom from all oppression and slavery there, *Eph. 4. -30.* Yea, every subject shall enjoy a kingdom and wear a crown there, *1 Jam. 1. 12.* So this Kingdom is given, not for our merit or works, but by right of sonship and by virtue of our adoption, even as the inheritance is conveyed unto the heir: for, saith the Apostle, speaking of Heaven, *They shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* 10. Though there be a mixture of sheep and goats, wheat and tares, godly and ungodly in the visible Church, *Mat. 13. 29, 30.* yet in Heaven there shall be no such mixture, no unclean thing shall enter there: for, *they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God,* saith *Paul.*

Verf. 22. But the fruit of the Spirit is Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentlenesse, goodnesse, faith,

THe Apostle, in like manner, for the better understanding, and the more easie practising of the remedy prescribed against fleshly lusts, ver. 16. He giveth a catalogue of some of those gracious vertues, and the exercise of them, which flow from the Spirit, or the root of Grace in the heart : And having called the former instances (ver. 19.) only *works of the flesh*, he designeth these by the name of *fruits of the Spirit* ; because they are acceptable to God, *Rom. 12. - 1.* and profitable to the man himself, *1 Tim. 6. 6.* as savoury and wholesom fruit, which the works of the flesh are not, *Rom. 6. 21.* Next, he ennumerateth nine of those fruits, not as if they were not moe, for there are many moe vertues than those, as knowledge, hope, patience, *2 Pet. 1. 5, &c.* but, because those are vertues standing almost in direct opposition to the former vices, and such as for the exercise thereof he wished chiefly among those Galatians ; Which are, first, *Love*, or an holy affection whereby we love God for Himself (*Mat. 22. 37.*) and our neighbour in, and for God, *1 Job. 4. 21.* Secondly, *Joy*, that holy affection of the soul, delighting it self, and taking pleasure in those things, and in that measure which God alloweth. Thirdly, *Peace*, or that concord and agreement which a reconciled soul hath with God, *Rom. 5. 1.* and which he endeavourereth to have with all men in God, *Heb. 12. 14.* Fourthly, *Long-suffering*, whereby we moderate anger, do patiently bear, and forgive even many injuries, *Col. 3. - 12, 13.* Fifthly, *Gentleness*, or kindness ; whereby we labour to be affable and pleasant unto our neighbour, and easie to be intreated, even when he hath wronged us, *Rom. 12. 14. Eph. 4. 32.* Sixtly, *Goodnesse*, a vertue whereby we are inclined to communicate what good is in us for the advantage of our neighbour both in his spiritual (*1 Pet. 4. 10.*) and bodily (*Gal. 6. 10.*) estate. Seventhly, *Faith*, whereby we conceive in this place is understood not so much justifying faith, and faith towards God, which is the

the root and fountain of all those fruits, (*ver. 6.*) as faith and fidelity towards men, whereby from a renewed heart and for God's glory we speak nothing but truth, *Eph. 4. 25.* and make conscience to perform whatsoever is undertaken by us, *Psal. 15. 4.* Eighthly, *Meeknesse*, a vertue whereby we moderate anger, so as that we are not provoked but for just causes, and not more or longer provoked than the Word of God alloweth, whereby also we do speedily restraint and suppress anger when it hath transgressed the just bounds, *Eph. 4. 26.* Ninthly, *Temperance*, or continency, whereby our fleshly appetite is kept within bounds, in seeking after honour, meat, drink, pleasure or riches. Lastly, The Apostle, having made this enumeration, that he may excite the Galatians to the practice of those vertues, he commendeth them from this, That the Law was not made against them or the practisers of them, either to condemn or accuse them. In which words, by a figure, or flower of speech, more is to be understood than is spoken, as *Psal. 51. 17.* even that the Moral Law (concerning the standing whereof, as to its directing power, there was no controversie betwixt Paul and his adversaries) doth expressly command and commend them, which could not be said of those ceremonial abstinences or performances, so much urged by the false Apostles. *Doct. 1.* There is no way for gracious vertues, or the fruits of the Spirit to grow and thrive in our heart, unlesse the works of the flesh be set against, and in some measure mortified: these thistles and weeds must be plucked up, else they draw the sap and strength of the heart from the good grain: The Apostle's method pointeth at so much, while he engageth them to mortifie the works of the flesh in the first place, and next commendeth unto them the fruits of the Spirit; *But the fruit of the Spirit is Love, joy, peace, &c.* 2. It is not sufficient that we set about the work of mortification and curbing of sin and vice, but must also endeavour to have the heart replenished with the contrary gracious vertues; otherwise sin, being as it were over-

powered, may lurk for a season, but will afterwards revive and take strength, *Mat. 12. 44. 45.* for, the Apostle, having engaged them to mortifie the works of the flesh, doth now excite them to the exercise of gracious vertues; *But the fruit of the Spirit is Love, joy, peace, &c.* 3. There is no vertue truly saving and acceptable to God, but that which floweth from the grace of regeneration. The vertues of the Heathen, how excellent soever they seemed to be, were but shadows of saving vertues, as not coming from a clean fountain, a gracious root in the heart, *Job 14. 4.* nor yet levelling at the right end, God's glory in the chief place, *Col. 3. 17.* but some other thing inferior to that, *Act. 24. 26.* Besides, they were not done in faith, and so could not be acceptable to God, *Heb. 11. 6.* for, the Apostle calleth all those which are vertues indeed, the fruits and effects of the Spirit; *But the fruit of the Spirit is Love, joy, peace, faith* he. 4. If we compare the graces of God's Spirit with the works of the flesh, there will appear such a beauty in the one, such deformity in the other, such solid satisfaction and contentment in the one, and such disquietnesse and vexation of spirit in the other, that laying aside the difference which is betwixt them by reason of their original and event, those other considerations may serve abundantly to make us fall in love with the graces of God's Spirit, and abominate the works of the flesh: for, the works of the flesh, are *Adultery, witchcraft, hatred, strife, envyings, murders*; but the fruit of the Spirit, is *Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, &c.* 5. We are to judge of persons and practices, by thinking well of them, or otherwise, not according to the common esteem in which they are among men, *1 Cor. 4. 3.* but according to the esteem that God hath of them, and according to what the Word of God, which is the absolute rule of right and wrong. Truth and Error, doth pronounce concerning them: for, *Paul* judgeth it sufficient to commend the practice of those vertues from this, that the Law of God did commend them, and approved of those who made conscience of them; *Against such there is no Law,* saith he.

Verſ.

Verf. 24. *And they that are Christs, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.*

THE Apostle, in this Verse, addeth a new Argument to intorce the practice of that first Rule given, ver. 13. and cleared, ver. 19, 20 21. to wit, that *they should not give occasion to, or fulfill the lusts of the flesh*; because those who are Christs, as they all professed themselves to be, have by vertue of Christ's death, crucified and put to death their fleshly corruption, with all its sinfull motions, whether they be sinfull affections and passions, such as those, whereby the mans mind doth suffer, is troubled and afflicted, as malice, envie, anger, and the like; or whether they be sinfull lusts, such as these which are stirred up by fleshly carnal baits and pleasures, as motions to intemperance, uncleannesse, and such like. Now those who are Christ's, are said to have crucified all those, because every one who professeth the Name of Christ, hath engaged himself by his profession and covenant sealed in Baptism to to do, *Rom. 6. 3. 4.* and the truly Regenerate, besides this engagement by profession, have actually begun this work: so that though this body of corrupt flesh be in them; yet by His Spirit (*Rom. 8. 13.*) and by imitating His Crosse (*Rom. 6. 6.*) they are upon the work of mortifying it, suppressing the endeavours, and smothering the effects of it, *Rom. 6. 12. Doct. 1.* All they who are led by, and walk in the Spirit, or who are truly regenerate, and who are actually engaged in the work of mortifying their corrupt nature, are *Christs* in a peculiar manner, to wit, by right of donation from the Father, *Job. 6. 37.* by right of emption or redemption, *1 Cor. 6. 20.* and by right of resignation, all such having actually resigned themselves unto Christ, as a mansion for Him to dwell and walk in, *1 Cor. 6. 19.* and in every thing to be guided by Him, *Act. 9. 6.* for, the Apostle useth those expressions indifferently as being of equal extent, *Walk in the Spirit*, ver. 16. and *if ye be led by the Spirit*,

rit, ver. 18. and in this verse, *they who are Christs, have crucified the flesh.* 2. The work of mortification striketh at all sin, and spareth none, as well pleasant sins, whereby fleshly lusts are satisfied, as other more vexatious evils, whereby the mind doth in a kind suffer, and is afflicted: for, speaking of this work, he saith, *They that are Christs, have crucified the flesh,* that is, the root of corruption, and then they have crucified all its branches, not only *affecti-
ons*, or vexing passions, but also desirable *lusts*. 3. There is not any argument more moving or effectually exciting unto the work of mortification with a sincere Christian, than that which is taken from his engagement to it by profession, and the first beginnings thereof wrought in him already by the Spirit of God; for, this is the Apostles scope, that they would not walk in, or fulfill the lusts of the flesh, because all of them were engaged by profession to crucifie the flesh, and some had actually begun to do so already; *They that are Christs, have crucified the flesh,* saith he.

Ver. 25. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

HE inforceth also the remedy prescribed against fleshly lusts, ver. 16. and cleared, ver. 22, 23. even that *they would walk after the Spirit*; because they who live in the Spirit, or are made partakers of that new life of grace in Regeneration, *Joh. 3. 5, 6.* (according as they all professed themselves to be) must of necessity walk in the Spirit, by following in their life and conversation the motions and directions of the new-man of grace in the heart. The force of which consequence lyeth in this, that as the principle of life is within, whether *flesh* or *spirit*, so must the actions, fruits and effects flowing from that principle be. *Dock. 1.* The Minister of Jesus Christ is not to bind heavy burdens upon the Lords People, without so much as touching them with one of his little fingers himself, *Mat. 23. 4.* but ought to lay the edg of every necessary exhortation unto his own heart with the first,

first, and thereby to evidence, that as he doth not look on himself, as free from the yoke of duty no more than others; So he sincerely intendeth by his own practice to hold forth a real copie of that which he presseth upon others, 1 Tim. 4. 12. for, Paul directeth this exhortation to himself as well as to them; *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit*, saith he. 2. The Lord's method in bestowing grace upon gracelesse sinners, is first, to infuse the principles of a new life, or gracious habits and powers in the soul; and next, to actuate these powers, making them actually to do those works which are spiritually good: Spiritual motion and action presuppoeth a principle of a spiritual life, as a thing previous unto, and different from it: for, saith he, *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit*. 3. To walk in the Spirit, or to follow the conduct of God's Spirit, and of His gracious work in us, is a far other thing, than to cast by the rule of the Word, and to follow only whatever motions or impressions are set home with any forcible impulse upon our spirits, as if those were the motions of the Spirit of God, which may haply be motions of our own corrupt flesh, or suggestions from Satan, 2 Thess. 2. 11. This walking in the Spirit here exhorted unto, is walking orderly and by rule, even by the rule of God's Word, Isa. 8. 20. for, so much doth the word in the Original import, which signifieth to *walk orderly*, by rule, by line, by measure, as Souldiers do march into the battel; *Let us walk in the Spirit*, saith he. 4. Though a man cannot passe sentence upon his state before God, whether it be good or bad, by some more or fewer particular acts of his life, 1 King. 8. 46, yet he may and ought to passe sentence upon it according to his way, and the ordinary strain of his life and conversation. A godlesse conversation argueth a carnal heart destitute of all spiritual life, and a pious conversation doth argue a renewed heart, and a principle of spiritual life within: for, so much will the Apostle's reasoning bear, *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit*.

Verf. 26. *Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*

THe Apostle (having hitherto prosecuted and inforced the use-making of that first rule given, ver. 13. for directing them in the right use of Christian liberty) returneth now to prosecute the other rule, *By love serve one another*; And in this Verse dehortheth them from some vices, which do wholly impede this service of love, especially from ambition, or an itching desire after vain glory, estimation and applause; which vice is usually attended with other two, first, provoking of others, chiefly inferiours, by reproaching and doing of real injuries to them, as being nothing in the vain-glorious mans esteem, he esteemeth so much of himself. Secondly, envying of others, chiefly superiours and equals, in so far as any thing in them doth seem to eclipse that glory and esteem of which the vain-glorious man is so much desirous. *Doct.* 1. Though a man may lawfully carry a due regard unto, and have a care of his own good name and estimation among others in its own place, *Rom. 12. -17.* especially that hereby he may be kept in a better capacity to do good unto those with whom he doth converse; *Mat. 5. 16.* Yet, desire of applause and approbation from men is sinfull, and to be eschewed, when we seek after, and are satisfied with applause or esteem for those things which are not in us, *2 King. 10. 16* or which are not worthy of so much esteem as we do seek for, *Amos 6. 13.* or are not praise-worthy at all, as not being commended of God, *Philip. 3. 19.* or when we seek after applause from men, even for things praise-worthy, not in subordination to; but equally with, or more than the honour of God, (*Mat. 6. 2.*) or to be approved of Him, *Joh. 12. 43.* for, this is the desire of vain glory, from which the Apostle dehortheth; *Let us not be desirous of vain glory,* saith he. 2. How this desire of vain glory impedeth love and peace, and how all glory of this kind is but vain
or

or empty glory, See *Philip. 2. Vers. 3. Doct. 2, 3. Doct. 3.* This lust and desire of vain glory is so subtil, as taking its rise sometimes from those things in us which are good, *2 Cor. 12. 7.* and so desirable, as tending to make others prostrate themselves before the idol of those apprehended or real excellencies in us which we our selves do so much adore; that the best of men, and those who are endued with excellent graces, gifts and priviledges, have need to guard and watch, lest even they be overtaken with it: for, therefore, as one reason, doth *Paul* include himself in this exhortation; *Let us not be desirous of vain glory.* 4. Though it be lawful and praise-worthy to provoke and excite one another to love and good works, *Heb. 10. 24.* chiefly by our good example and forwardnesse in every commanded duty, *2 Cor. 9. 2.* yet, when by doing of real injuries unto others we provoke and excite corruption in them to take some sinfull course for their own ease or redresse (*1 Sam. 25. 33, 34.*) we are herein guilty, and that not only of committing sin our selves, but of being the occasion of sin unto others, and therefore would elchew it: for, this is it the Apostle forbiddeth, even *provoking one another.* 5. In setting against any sin, we would look not only upon that sin alone, but also upon those other possibly lesse pleasant and baser sins, which of necessity do accompany it; that so our indignation may be heightened the more against it, as carrying with it a train of such attendants: for, here the Apostle, dehorting them from the desire of vain glory, that he may make them the more to detest it, holdeth forth the necessary dependance which two other vexations and base evils have upon it; *Provoking one another, envying one another,* saith he.

C H A P. V I.

IN the first part of this Chapter, he presseth the exercise of mutual love, in two exhortations. And, first, he exhorteth them to endeavour the reclaiming of those who were fallen, ver. 1. and to bear patiently with the finfull infirmities one of another; because, first, hereby they should obey the Command enjoying mutual love, ver. 2. Secondly, self-conceit, which marreth the exercise of this duty, is but a self-deceiving, ver. 3. And therefore he prescribeth a remedy against that evil, to wit, self-searching; And inforceth it, because, first, they should attain to such gloriation as God alloweth of, ver. 4. And secondly, every man must give an account of his own actions to God, ver. 5. In the second place, he exhorteth unto beneficence in the general, and especially towards their Ministers, ver. 6. And, having held forth God for a party unto those who neglect this duty, he doth presse it from the similitude of sowing and reaping, ver. 7. which he enlargeth, and applyeth to an harvest of death and corruption to be reaped by those who do evil, and of life eternal by those who do well, ver. 8. whence he inforceth perseverance in the study of beneficence, promising the expected fruit of their so doing in due time, ver. 9. and so concludeth the exhortation, pressing upon them the use-making of the present opportunity, ver. 10.

In the second part, he concludeth the Epistle; first, insinuating how much he loved them, ver. 11. Secondly, insinuating that the false Apostles were not acted from love to them, but from hypocrisie, worldly policy, ver. 12. and from vain glory, ver. 13. Thirdly, he opposeth his own truly Christian carriage to those sins of the false Apostles, shewing he gloried only in the crosse of Christ, and that the world, and applause from men were undervalued by him, ver. 14. Of both which he giveth

giveth two reasons. first, nothing worldly is accounted of by Christ, but the new creature only, ver. 15. Secondly, glorying in Christ, and in the study of piety, and of the new creature, is the only rule, in walking according to which, there is peace, ver. 16. Fourthly, The Apostle (having discharged any to trouble him further, whether by their errors, or calumnies, seeing the standing prints of his sufferings did abundantly refute both, ver. 17) saluted them with his ordinary farewell-wish, ver. 18.

Verf. 1. **B**rethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thy self, lest thou also be tempted.

THe Apostle, having (chap. 5. ver. 26.) dehorted from some vices which do wholly impede that service by love, which is enjoined, chap. 5. 13. he doth in the first part of this Chapter, exhort them to several duties, in which the exercise of mutual love doth consist. And first, he speaketh to those who are *spiritual*, that is, such as had received a large measure of spiritual graces, whereby they were preserved from the subtil snares of sin and Satan, which had intrapped others; and who are called *strong*, Rom. 15. 1. and *perfect*, to wit, comparatively, *Philip*. 3. 15. Those he exhorteth to endeavour the reclaiming and restoring (both to the sense of God's pardoning grace, and to amendment of life) of all such who were overtaken, and as it were, inconsiderately and suddenly surprized with any sin (for, the active Verb of the word *overtaken*, in the Original, signifieth to do a thing preposterously and in haste, 1 *Cor*. 11. 21.) And in order hereto, that in the use of all means undertaken for this end, whether of admonition, reproof, or necessary correction, they would exercise the grace of spiritual meekness, suppressing all fleshly passions, and revengefull affections. Which exhortation he inforceth by two arguments: the first whereof is laid down by way

way of admonition in this Verse, that every man, even the best, while he dealeth with the faults of others, would enter in a deep consideration of his own frailty, and how easily under a tentation he may be surprized with the same, the like, or a greater sin. *Doct. 1.* Though it be very ordinary for men to bear too much with sin both in themselves and others, *1 Sam. 3. - 13.* Yet there is another sinfull extremity to be avoided, to wit, when under pretence of hatred to, or just indignation against the sins of others, we give them over as incorrigible, and cannot admonish, reprove, or in any thing carry our selves towards them in the spirit of meeknesse: for, saith the Apostle, *If a man*, or, as the word may also read by way of obviating an objection, *Though a man be overtaken in a fault, restore such an one, &c.* which supposeth that some were apt to think themselves freed from the duty here commanded towards a person so overtaken; and the Apostle sheweth, that neverthelesse they were bound to restore him, and deal meekly with him, even though he were overtaken in a fault. *2.* This sin of too much rigor and severity towards the sinful failings and escapes of others (though it pretend to zeal, *Isa. 65. 5.* yet) hath its rise from pride and ambition; while the rigid critick, and lofty censurer of another mans faults doth not so much seek after his brother's amendment, as to beget in the minds of others a good opinion of himself, as if he were singular for holiness and hatred of sin above others: for, the connexion of the two Chapters doth shew that this sin here guarded against, hath some kind of dependance upon vain-glory; *Let us not be desirous of vain-glory*, chap. 5. 26. And, *if a man be overtaken in a fault, restore him in the spirit of meeknesse.* *3.* The Minister of Jesus Christ would labour to digest his exhortations unto duties, that his very expressions and convey of them being fitted to the purpose in hand, may be as so many forcible motives to bear-in that duty unto which he exhorteth: for, the Apostle, being here to inforce the exercise of love and meeknesse upon those Galatians in the recovery

recovery of those who had fallen, calleth them *Brethren*, thereby expressing his love to them, and minding them of that love they ought to carry one to another, as being Brethren; and designeth the person to be restored by the common name of a *man*, thereby pointing at the common frailty of mankind, to shew his falling in sin is rather to be pitied, than made a wonder of; and withall transferreth the guilt of the sin in a great measure from the person himself to the subtilty of Satan and violence of the tentation by which he was surprized and overtaken; every one whereof doth serve as a motive unto that pity and meeknesse unto which he exhorteth; *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault*, saith he.

4. Though those who are so maliciously obstinate in sin, that lenity and meeknesse prevaileth nothing in order to their reclaiming, are to be used with more severity and rigor, *1 Cor. 4. 21*. Yet others, concerning whom we have not ground in charity so to judge, but rather that they are surprized by the violence of some prevalent tentation, ought to be more gently dealt with: for, they are only such, whom the Apostle will have to be used with a spirit of meeknesse; *If a man be overtaken in a fault, restore such an one, &c.*

5. So subtil and assiduous is Satan in tempting, *1 Pet. 5. 8*. So ready is corruption in us to close with a tentation so soon as it is presented, *Eph. 2. 2*. that if the childe of God be not all the more circumspect and diligent, *Mat. 26. 41*. he cannot choose but be surprized, as it were unawares, by some one sin or other, and be thereby made to dishonour God, and to lay a stumbling-block before others: for, Paul supposeth it as a thing incident unto all men to be thus surprized, while he saith, *If a man be overtaken in a fault*.

6. Though it be the duty of all men to endeavour the reclaiming of those who are lying under un-repented guiltinesse, (for the Command is given unto all, *Lev. 19. 17.*) yet, the more holy men are, and the further they have advanced in the wayes of piety, they are the more obliged to go about this duty, chiefly, because they are

in a better capacity to discharge it ; as being lesse tainted with sin than others, and so having more freedom to reprove ; as also being more knowing how to go wisely about that difficile duty, and more willing to perform it than others, whose knowledge and love to God's glory and their neighbours good, cometh short of theirs : for, the Apostle directeth this exhortation mainly to such as had received a greater measure of grace than others ; *Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one.* 7. The greater store of graces and gifts a man hath received, he standeth the more obliged to lay out himself and all his receipts for the spiritual good and edification of others ; providing alwayes he move in his own sphere, and transgress not the bounds of his calling, *Heb. 5. 4.* for, *Paul* layeth this task of restoring the backsliden Christian chiefly upon those who had received a greater measure of grace and spiritual enduements than others ; *Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one.* 8. As scandalous sins, and erroneous opinions being fallen into by a childe of God, do mar that orderly frame of the inward man, which he did before enjoy, wasting the conscience and eating out the edge of all his former tenderesse, *1 Pet. 2. - 11.* So the person who hath fallen in such sins, doth ordinarily prove backward to be reclaimed, and very ticklish to be medled with by others for that end ; as a man who hath a bone dis-joynted can hardly endure to have it touched: The word rendred *restore such an one*, doth bear so much, as signifying to set in joynt the dislocated members of the body, So that sin putteth the soul as it were out of joyne. 9. As it is the duty of all, and especially of those who are spiritual, to endeavour the reclaiming of any who are so fallen, by admonition (*Mat. 18. 15.*) reproof (*Lev. 19. 17.*) prayer to God on their behalf, *Jam. 5. 14, 15.* (all which, and other means in order to the same end, are to be gone about by private Christians by vertue of that cy which christian charity, and their mutual relation one to another, arising from their being members of one body, do lay on ; and by publick Ministers and Church-

Church-guides, by vertue of that authority wherewith Christ the King of the Church hath invested them, *Eph. 4. 11, 12.*) So in the use of all these means, every one is to carry himself with much skill and tenderesse, if he would attain the proposed end : for, saith he, *Ye who are spiritual, restore such an one*, or, set him in joynt again; It is a phrase borrowed from Chirurgians, who, being to deal with a dis-joynted bone, will handle the same with skill and tenderesse. 10. The grace of meeknesse, whereby we moderate inordinate anger, and speedily repress revengeful passions, before they come to any great height, *Eph. 4. 26.* as it is the work of Gods Spirit in us; so the exercise of it is most necessary towards those who are fallen, and that all the means we use in order to their reclaiming be seasoned therewith, as being in nothing transported with the fury of rage and passion, but only acted with zeal to God, love to the person fallen, and with sanctified reason ; for, thereby we evidence we are seeking the recovery of our brother, and not insulting over him; we are labouring to help him, and not seeking to disgrace him : for, saith he, *Restore such an one in the spirit of meeknesse*, or, in meeknesse, whereof Gods Spirit is the author. 11. There is no man, no not the most spiritual, who can promise unto himself immunity from being set upon with strong tentations unto grosse and scandalous evils, or that he shall stand when he is tempted, if he be left of God under the tentation : for, he biddeth even the spiritual man consider himself, *lest he also be tempted* ; whereby he holdeth forth not only a possibility that the spiritual man may be tempted, but also of his yeelding to the tentation, when it should be presented, otherwise the argument had not been of such strength to inforce upon him the exercise of meeknesse towards those who are overtaken in a fault. 12. As those who do most rigidly and uncharitably censure the faults of others, are usually greatest strangers to their own hearts, and very little sensible of their own infirmities ; So the serious consideration of our own weaknesse,

and how the root of our neighbours sin, and of all other sin is in us (*Rom.* 3. v. 10, to 20.) how we stand by grace (*Psal.* 94. 18.) and how, if God would suffer the tempter to break loose upon us, we should so much exceed the sins of others, as they exceed ours: The serious consideration, I say, of all those, though it should not bind us wholly up from reproving sin in others; yet, it should cause us exceedingly to mix and temper our severity towards their sin with the exercise of meeknesse, pity and compassion towards their person: for, the Apostle, to inforce the former exhortation of restoring their fallen brother in the spirit of meeknesse, doth enjoin, *consider thy self, lest thou also be tempted.* 13. So prone are we to entertain good thoughts of our selves, that it is a matter of no small difficulty to make a man reflect upon himself, and enter upon a serious consideration of his own frailty and weaknesse, and of every other thing which may keep him low in his own eyes, without insulting over, or despising of others, as appeareth from *Paul's* changing of the number: for, having said, *Ye who are spiritual, restore, &c.* in the plural number; here he saith, *considering thy self, lest thou also, &c.* in the singular; which he doth to give the greater force and sharper edge to his admonition, as knowing he was pressing a duty, which very hardly, and not without difficulty, would be obeyed.

Verf. 2. Bear ye one anothers burdens, and so fulfill the Law of Christ.

THe Apostle, first, enlargeth the former exhortation, both as to the persons exhorted (for now he exhorteth not only those who are spiritual, but all of them) And also as to the duty exhorted unto, which is extended not only to an endeavour of reclaiming those who were overtaken in a fault, but also, to the tolerating and bearing patiently with the sins and infirmities of others, untill they be amended, and the sinner reclaimed: which
sins

sins are designed by the name of a *burden*; partly, because some such sins are a burden and weight to the sinner himself, either by reason of his grief and sorrow for them, if he be a penitent, *Act. 2. 37.* or by reason of that vexation and trouble which some sins, as wrath, malice and envie, do bring to the natural spirits even of the impenitent sinner, *Job 5. 2. Prov. 14. 30.* And partly, because some such sins, though not felt by the sinner himself, are yet heavy burdens unto those who converse with him, as his curiosity, back-biting, self-seeking, and such like, *Prov. 16. 28.* Secondly, he inforceth the exhortation, thus enlarged, by a second argument, to wit, That hereby they did fulfill the Law, or command of mutual love, which he calleth the *Law of Christ*; not as if love to our neighbour had not been enjoined before Christ came in the flesh; for, it is a prime piece of the Law of Nature, imprinted upon the heart of man at the Creation, and was renewed again by God Himself upon mount *Sinai*, *1 Job. 2. 7.* But because, first, Christ did renew this Command, not only by freeing it from the false glosses and interpretations of Scribes and Pharisees, *Mat. 5. 23, &c.* but also by pressing it in its spiritual beauty and nature, having laid aside and abolished the external cover of Mosaical Ceremonies (*Eph. 2. 15.*) under which it was veiled, *1 Cor. 9. 9, 10.* In which respect mainly it is here called the *Law of Christ*, in opposition to the false Apostles, who pressed so much the Mosaical Law of Ceremonies. And, secondly, because Christ did presse this Law, so renewed, in a singular manner upon His followers, as a mark of true faith in Him, *Job. 13. 35.* And thirdly, because Christ did fulfill this Law in His own person, and thereby left an example of it unto us, *1 Job. 3. 16. Doct. 1.* As there are none free of sinful infirmities, which are burdensome sometimes to themselves, and frequently unto others: So we ought not to break the bond of common society, which we are otherwayes tyed unto, because of those: but are to persist in it, patiently bearing those infirmities which we cannot otherwayes

help: for, saith he, *Bear ye one anothers burdens.* 2. This duty of bearing with the infirmities of others, doth well consist with the use of such lawfull means as God hath prescribed, whether to the Magistrate for restraining sin, by punishing those who do evil, *Rom. 13.-4.* or, to Ministers and private Christians, in order to the sinner's reclaiming by admonition, reproof, and such like: for, this duty of *bearing one anothers burdens*, must agree with, and cannot be contrary unto, that other duty prescribed, *v. 1.* which is to restore the sinner unto that state wherein he was, so far must we be from giving him countenance, or partaking with him in his sins. 3. A compassionate frame of spirit, made evident by our meek and patient deportment towards those who are overtaken in a fault, without neglecting any duty we owe unto them, doth afford the guilty sinner no small ease under his weighty exercise, and tendeth much both to his preservation from fainting under heartlesse discouragement (if his conscience be touched with the sense of his guilt) and to carry on the work of his conviction and amendment: (if he be yet going on securely in his sin) for, the Apostle, having exhorted to such a meek and patient deportment towards those who are overtaken in a fault, he calleth it here a bearing of their burden, or an affording of help to them under it; *Bear ye one anothers burdens.* 4. There is no such evidence of love to our neighbour, as when it kytheth in our serious endeavours for bringing about his spiritual good, and in taking the most effectual condescending and affectionate way in order to his reclaiming from sin, together with our supporting of him, and sympathizing with him under his spirituall weights: for, the Apostle calleth this a fulfilling of the Law of Christ, or of mutual love, as if that Law did call for this only; *And so fulfill the Law of Christ*, saith he. 5. In what sense and measure the childe of God doth attain to evidence his love to his fallen brother by his serious endeavours to restore him unto the enjoyment of God's favour, and to an holy and blamelesse conversation,

tion, and by his bearing with him under his infirmities, in order to his recovery, in that same sense and measure he attaineth to fulfill the Law; whence it followeth, because he is not able to do the former perfectly, and so as to come short in nothing for matter, or manner, (*1 Jam. 3. 2.*) but only sincerely, and without dissimulation, *Rom. 12. 9.* therefore neither can he keep the Law perfectly, but only in sincerity, and in his honest aim and endeavour, *Psal. 119. 6.* for, saith he, *Bear ye one anothers burdens, and so fulfill the Law of Christ.*

Verſe 3. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

THe Apostle, in further prosecution of the former exhortation, doth fall upon the sin of self-conceit and arrogancy, which causeth men condemn others, and carry themselves with a kind of supercilious disdain towards such as are overtaken in a fault, contrary to what he had exhorted them unto, ver. 1, 2. And, first, he tacitly dehorteth them from this vice, by shewing the man who is puffed up with a conceit of his own enduements above others, and to the despising of others being compared with himself, doth deceive himself, and maketh his own mind to erre in passing judgment of himself (as the word doth signifie) and giveth a reason of this assertion, because every man, even the best is nothing, as having no good in himself, and of himself, *1 Cor. 3. 5.* for which he ought to be puffed up, and to despise others because of their infirmities. *Doct. 1.* Then are duties pressed unto some good purpose by the Lord's Ministers upon His People, when a discovery is made of those lurking evils which do withhold from the practice of those duties, and pains are taken to set them upon the task of subduing such evils, if they would come speed in the conscientious practice of the commanded duty: for, *Paul*, having exhorted to restore those who are fallen, and to bear one anothers burden, he doth now dissuade them

from the sin of self-conceit and arrogancy, as that which doth impede the practice of that duty; *If a man think himself to be something*, saith he. 2. As it is ordinary for men to conceit too highly of themselves, whether by apprehending those excellencies to be in themselves, which really are not, *Prov. 26. 16.* or, by overvaluing those excellencies, parts and other enjoyments, which they really have, above their just worth and esteems, *Ezek. 28. 3.* or, by looking on them, not as receipts from the Lord, but only as they are their own, or the fruit of their own industry or purchase, *Ezek. 28. 4, 5.* So, where this sin of self-conceit is fostered, it maketh the guilty person an insolent contemner of all others, a proud insulter over their infirmities; as taking occasion from those, to conceive so much the more highly of himself; for, this is the sin of a man's thinking himself to be something, which *Paul* supposeth to be a common evil, and speaketh against it, as that which maketh a man carry himself insolently towards others, especially those who are overtaken in a fault, as appeareth from the connexion, *If a man think himself to be something.* 3. Error in judgment hath sometimes its rise from some unmortified and raging lust in the heart and affections, the prevalency whereof doth byass the understanding, and in progresse of time doth unperceivably incline it to assent unto those opinions as Truths which may most gratifie those unmortified lusts: for, saith he, *He who thinketh himself something, deceiveth himself*, or, maketh his mind to erre; for so the word signifieth: importing hereby that those violent lusts of self-conceit, pride and arrogancy, did make them apprehend some real worth to be where there was none, whereby they might have somewhat to feed upon. 4. For a man to be deceived by himself, is of more dangerous consequence than to be deceived by any other, especially when a man deceiveth himself by having better thoughts of himself than there is ground or reason for; for hereby are men not only vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind, *Col. 2. -18.* but also

also made to cry Peace, peace, when sudden destruction cometh, *Mat. 7. 22, 23.* for, the Apostle insinuateth there is no small hazard in self-deceiving, while he maketh this alone a sufficient argument to dissuade from self-conceit and arrogancy, even that he *who thinketh himself to be something, deceiveth himself.* 5. As every man considered in himself is nothing, being destitute of all good, *Rom. 7. 18.* yea, though he be considered in all his enduements both of Nature and Grace; yet he hath nothing for which he ought to conceit of himself, and despise others; for, what hath he which is not received? *1 Cor. 4. 7.* yea, and what he must be comtable for, how he doth imploy it? *Luke 12. 48.* So the serious consideration of this truth would be a singular engine to batter down those high mountains of self-conceit, which are ready to exalt themselves in a man's heart by reason of his apprehended or real excellencies, gifts or graces: for, Paul maketh use of this consideration to convince them how vain any high thoughts of that kind were; *If any man seem to himself to be something, when he is nothing, saith he;* which last sentence is spoken of all men generally, and serveth for an argument to prove that the self-admirer, is a self-deceiver, seeing every man is nothing.

Verf. 4. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

Secondly, The Apostle striketh at one root and cause of self-conceit and arrogancy, to wit, our comparing our selves with others who are worse than our selves (for, we may, and ought compare with those who are better than our selves, that so we may be humbled, *2 Cor. 10. 12.* but this comparing with those whom we esteem worse than our selves, occasioneth self-conceit, *Luke 18. 11.*) Now Paul taketh them off this way, exhorting them to prove, and try their own work and carriage by the rule of Gods Word, without comparing it with the carriage of others (for, so they behoved to try the work of others also) and that

that they would so prove their own work, as to approve it, and find matter of approbation in it, if it were to be found; (for, the Greek word rendred *prove*, significth also to approve, as *Rom. 14. 22. 1 Cor. 16. 3.*) Which exhortation is enforced by two reasons; first Hereby they should find matter of such gloriation and boasting as God alloweth of, even in themselves alone, that is, in the testimony of a good conscience, *2 Cor. 1. 12.* and should not need to borrow matter of boasting from the sins of others, which the Lord doth no wayes approve of, *1 Cor. 5. 1.* *Doct. 1.* As a man who would set against a sin to purpose, and with successe, must search out, and set against every other sin which doth ordinarily prove an occasion of that sin which he intendeth to subdue and mortifie; So the Minister of Christ, in the reproof of sin, ought to point forth unto the Lord's People those things which are the sewel and occasion of such and such sins, and press upon them an abstinence even from those: for, the Apostle, having dissuaded (ver. 3.) from self-conceit, doth here point at the occasion of that sin, even their comparing themselves with others, whom they judged worse than themselves, and dissuadeth them from that also, while he saith, *But let every man prove his own work.* 2. As it is the duty of every man without exception, to reflect upon his own actions, and to take an exact trial of them by the touchstone of Gods Word, *Psal. 119. 9.* not only if for the substance of the action they be commanded or warranted in His Word, *Isa. 29. - 13.* but also if they be done in the right manner, *Luke 8. 18.* that is, if they come from the root of a renewed heart, (*Mat. 7. 18.*) have their rise from right motives (*Phil. 1. 15.*) and be directed to the right end, Gods glory in the first place (*1 Cor. 10. 3.*) or not: So he ought not to rest satisfied with a simple probation and trial of his actions, except he find them to be such after trial, as he may upon just grounds approve them, and approve himself to God in them, *2 Tim. 2. 15.* for, saith he, *Let every one prove, and so, as he may safely approve, his own work,* as the

the word signifieth ; and such a probation must be here
 meant, otherwise the Apostle's consequence should not
 follow upon a mans proving his work, even that he shall
 have rejoycing in himself. 3. Though Civil Magistrates
 and Church-guides are to prove, even judicially, the
 work of others, who are committed to their charge,
Rom. 13. - 3. 4. *Tit.* 3. 10. and though private Christians
 are also bound to prove all things by a judgement of
 christian discretion, that so they may hold what is good,
1 Thess. 5. 21. and be provoked unto love and good
 works, *Heb.* 10. 23. but not, that they have whereat to
 carp, *Psal.* 56. 5, 6. or whereby to be lifted up with an
 high and vain conceit of themselves above others, *1 Cor.*
 5. 2. yet the great thing whereabout our most accurate
 and daily search and trial should be imployed, is, our
 own actions, and by proportion our own spiritual state,
2 Cor. 13. 5. and frame of heart, *Psal.* 26. 2. Yea, those,
 and only those are to be the object of our trial, when the
 end proposed in our trial, is, to find out matter of boast-
 ing in the testimony of a good conscience, and from
 which we may conclude, that we are approved of God :
 for, this is the end of the trial here enjoined ; and there-
 fore saith he, *Let every man prove his own work.* 4. This
 work of self-trying, and proving of our own work, being
 seriously and frequently gone about, would tend excec-
 dingly not only to curb those lofty thoughts which we
 have of our selves, but also to divert from those unchar-
 itable, censorious and base thoughts which we have of
 others because of their infirmities and failings : for, the
 Apostle opposeth this duty as an antidote to that sin of
 self-conceit before reproved, and by consequence doth
 presse it as an help to that duty of tenderesse and com-
 passion towards those who are overtaken in a fault, en-
 joyned, ver. 1, 2. But, saith he, *let every man try his own
 work.* 5. It is in some cases and respects lawful for men
 to glory and boast in themselves, or in the good things
 of God bestowed upon them, that is, not only to rejoyce
 because of them, but also to expresse their joy, *2 Cor.* 1. 12.
 and

and to expect approbation and applause from men because of them, *2 Cor.* 12. 11. providing they glory in them, as evidences of God's love to them, and so, as they may thereby assure their hearts before Him of their interest in His favour and good-will. *1 Job.* 3. 19. and as enduements fitting them to serve God, by promoting His glory in their own salvation, and their neighbours good, and in every other duty which they are bound to in their station, *1 Cor.* 15. -10- and as they are fitting occasions to incite themselves or others, to give that glory to God which is due, *Mat.* 5. 16. providing also that they glory in them (to wit, in so far as this gloriation importeth a seeking approbation to themselves) but sparingly, *2 Cor.* 11. -16. and for the most part as of necessity and to maintain their uprightness before men, when it is unjustly called in question, *2 Cor.* 12. 11. *Job* 27. 4, &c. and that they be not puffed up with conceit of themselves, as if those good things did proceed from themselves alone, and not from God, *1 Cor.* 15. 10. and that the approbation which they expect, be not endeavoured as their furthest design, *Mat.* 6. 2. but as a mean of rendering them the more capable for promoting God's glory in their place and station, *1 Tim.* 3. 7. and most especially, providing that they glory not in those things, as if thereby they could merit the favour of God and eternal life; which boasting is condemned, *Rom.* 4. 2. In these respects, and with these limitations it is lawfull for men to glory in themselves: for, the Apostle speaketh of, this way of glorying as an allowed consequence of a man's proving of his own work; *Then*, saith he, *he shall have rejoycing* (or boasting) *in himself alone.* 6. That a man may warrantably and upon good grounds thus rejoyce in the good things of God bestowed upon him, especially so, as thereby to assure his heart before God, it is not sufficient that he compare himself with others, and find himself to be better than those, but he must try himself by the rule of God's Word, and after trial find himself approved by it; else his boasting is nought and vain,
even

even a deceiving of himself: for, the Apostle, speaking of this warrantable gloriation and boasting, affirmeth it to be the consequence of a man's *proving his own work*, and that it must be *in himself*, and not in another.

Verf. 5. *For every man shall bear his own burden.*

HERE is a second argument, inforcing upon every man the duty of trying his own work rather than to be narrowly prying into the infirmities of others; because every man must bear his own burden, or give an account of his own actions to God, *Rom. 14. 12.* for, the Lord will passe sentence upon men whether by absolving or condemning them, not as they have been better or worse than others, but as they shall be found in themselves absolutely considered, and without any respect had unto others, See *1 Cor. 3. -8.* which doth not militate against the tenour of the Gospel, affirming that Believers shall be reckoned with by God, as they are clothed, not with their own righteousness, but with the unspotted righteousness of Christ their Cautioner, *Philip. 3. 9.* for, it is evident from the scope, that the Apostle excludeth only the infirmities of other sinfull men, like unto our selves, from being the rule, according to which God will passe sentence, and not the righteousness of Christ apprehended by faith. *Dock. 1.* That a man may prove an happy interpreter of Scripture, and find out the mind of God's Spirit therein, it is necessary he do well understand the scope of the Spirit in that place, the sense whereof he intendeth to find out; the observing whereof will serve as a threed to conduct him in falling upon the genuine and literal meaning of the particular words & sentences, and wil preserve him from making the Scripture in hand thwart or contradict any other part of sacred Truth, which without observing of the scope he may readily fall in: for, this verse seemeth at the first view, to contradict that direction given, ver. 2. but the sense of both being collected from the scope, that seeming contrariety will

will evanish ; for, by *bearing one anothers burdens*, ver. 2. must be meant a bearing by way of sympathy, christian forbearance, and diligent use of means for reclaiming the person fallen ; for, that is it which the Apostle is pressing there, as appeareth from ver. 1. and in this sense every one ought to bear one anothers burdens : But by *bearing our burden*, in this verse, is meant a bearing by giving an account to God for our own actions (otherwise it should not be a cogent argument to inforce the exhortation propounded, ver. 4. *Let every man prove his own work*) and in this sense every man shall bear his own burden. 2. How light soever that mens sins do seem unto themselves when they are committed, yet they will be found not light, but heavy, when they come to reckon with God about them : for, the giving an account of our actions to God, goeth under the name of bearing a burden, *Every man shall bear his own burden*. 3. So righteous is God that He will call no man to an account for the sins of others, but only for his own, except he hath made those sins of others his own sins also, by not doing his duty to impede the committing of them, *Ezek. 3. 18.* or by following of, and walking in them, *Exod. 20. 5.* compared with *Ezek. 18. 14, 17.* or by not mourning to God for them, *1 Cor. 5. 2.* for, saith he, *Every man shall bear his own burden*. 4. It were our wisdom frequently to minde that great Accompt which we must give to God, and to busie our selves most in and about those things whereof He will crave an account of us : hence the Apostle maketh this a reason why men should be most employed in proving their own work, and not in accurate prying into the carriage and infirmities of others ; because it was their own work, whereof they behoved to give an account to God ; *For every man shall bear his own burden*, saith he.

Verſ. 6. *Let him that is taught in the Word, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things.*

IN the ſecond place, the Apoſtle exhorteth them unto beneficence, which may be looked upon as another piece of that ſerving one another through love, enjoyned chap. 5. - 13. and becauſe love to the Word growing cold among thoſe Galatians, by reaſon of their ſchiſm and the prevalency of error, it is probable that the due reſpect which they did owe to their Miniſters, was much decayed, except to ſuch only as were of their own faction and way, Therefore, in the firſt place, he exhorteth unto beneficence towards their Miniſters, directing his ſpeech to thoſe who were catechiſed, that is, taught familiarly by word of mouth, as when children are taught the firſt principles of Religion ; for, ſo the word, rendred *is taught*, doth ſignifie : or, more generally (as the word is here rendred, and taken elſewhere, 1 Cor. 14. 19. Rom. 2. - 18.) thoſe who are inſtructed, or taught whether more familiarly and plainly, or more profoundly in the Word, whereby may be meant either the Word of God in general, or of the Goſpel in particular, which frequently is called the Word by way of excellency (See upon Philip. 1. 14. Doct. 1.) Thoſe he exhorteth to communicate, and to give a ſhare unto their Miniſters of all their temporal goods, to wit, ſo much as might ſerve for their creditable maintenance. Doct. 1. The Lord Chriſt hath appointed two diſtinct ranks and ſorts of people to be in His viſible Church, ſome who are to be taught, fed, ruled and watched over, ſuch are all private Church-members ; and ſome who are to be Teachers, Paſtors, Guides and Watchmen over the Flock by vertue of their publick Office in the Houſe of God, the honour whereof is not to be taken by any man unto himſelf, except he be called as Aaron, Heb. 5. 4. And are all Teachers, 1 Cor. 12. 29. *Let him that is taught, communicate unto him that teacheth.*
2. As it was neceſſary that ſome ſhould be Teachers in
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the House of God ; so the wisdom of God hath thought it fit, because of our weaknesse (*Deut. 5. 23, &c.*) to teach us not by His own immediate Voice from Heaven; nor yet by glorious Angels, but by the Ministry of men like unto our selves, and those not usually of the greatest sort, but of such as stand in need of the peoples benevolence for their worldly subsistence, and this that the glory of converting souls may be ascribed not unto creatures, but unto God, *2 Cor. 4. 7.* for, so much is imported, while he saith, *Let him that is taught, communicate unto him that teacheth.* 3. As it is the duty of Christ's Ministers to teach and instruct the Lord's People, not so much by their writings, as by vocal preaching and word of mouth ; So the thing wherein they are to be instructed, is the knowledge not of humane writings, but of the Word of God contained in Scripture ; there being no word or writing besides, which hath a promise of such a blessing to accompany it, as this Word hath (*See Rom. 1. 17. 2 Tim. 3. 15, 17. Heb. 4. 12.*) for, saith he, *Let him that is taught* (or instructed by word of mouth) *in the Word,* meaning the written Word of God. 4. Seeing Christ's Ministers are to bestow themselves wholly in the work of the Ministry, *1 Tim. 4. 15.* and not to be intangled with the affairs of this life, *2 Tim. 2. 4.* and seeing they are the Lord's Instruments, by whom He conveyeth the richest blessings, even those which are spiritual, unto His People, *1 Cor. 9. 11.* Therefore the People of God among whom they spend their strength, are bound even by common equity to give them worldly maintenance, that they may neither be diverted from, nor discouraged in that most necessary and painfull work of watching over souls, *Heb. 13. 17.* for, saith he, *Let him that is taught, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things.* 5. This worldly maintenance, which people are bound to give unto their Ministers, though it should be moderate, and such as may not through its abundance occasion pride, luxury and prodigality in their Ministers ; yet it would be liberal, and creditable, even such as may
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not only supply their pinching necessities, but also as thereby they may be sustained in a way creditable unto the Gospel whereof they are Ministers, *1 Tim.* 5. 17. and may have wherewith to supply the necessities of the indigent, *1 Tim.* 3. -2. and to educate their children so, as afterwards they may sustain themselves, and be profitable members both of Church and Commonwealth, *1 Tim.* 5. 8. for, he commandeth the people *to communicate to their Ministers in all their temporal good things*; he saith, *in all*, and therefore liberally, though not lavishly.

6. Though the Civil Magistrate be obliged to provide some set and publick allowance for upholding the Gospel and Ministry thereof; this way coming nearer to the order appointed by God for maintaining the Priesthood under the Law, *Numb.* 35. 1, &c. and being free of several inconveniences, which can hardly be avoided in the way of giving voluntary contribution by every one who heareth the Gospel, towards those who preach the same: yet, in case the Magistrate provide not such publick allowance for them, or, if turning persecuter, he take that which is already provided by the Law for that use from them, Then it is the duty of every one who is taught in the Word, to maintain their Preachers by liberal contribution out of their own means, so far as is necessary for him that receiveth, and as he is able to spare who giveth: for, this was the case of the Church in *Paul's* time, being under persecuting Tyrants; And therefore he commandeth, *Let him that is taught, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things.*

7. The Churches maintenance is only due unto such Ministers as have abilities to preach the Gospel, and are faithfull and diligent Labourers in the Word, according to those abilities wherewith they are endued; And therefore, though private men are not hereby warranted to withdraw the ordinary and allowed maintenance from their Ministers upon pretence that they are either not able, or not painfull, *Mat.* 23. 2, 3. yet it concerneth those whom Christ hath intrusted to be Overseers of His House, to be care-

full that such who are either really unfit, or unwilling to preach, be removed from their Charge; and not suffered to eat up the Churches maintenance, feeding themselves, and starving the souls of people committed to their charge: Therefore the Apostle, while he pleadeth for maintenance to a Minister, doth describe him from the actual exercise of his Calling, *Let him communicate to him that teacheth.*

Verf. 7. Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

THe Apostle, supposing that those who were averſe from the duty of beneficence to their Miniſters, did colour their own avarice and naughtineſſe with a number of ſeemingly plausible excuſes taken from their pretended indigence, multiplicity of other burdens, and ſuch like, he ſpeaketh to ſuch witty cheaters as theſe in this verſe, deſiring them to advert, that though they might ſtop the mouthes of their honeſt-hearted Miniſters, (as not knowing how, or not being willing to contradict them in what they affirmed) and might mock them for their ſimplicity afterwards; yet they had another party to deal with in this matter, even God Himſelf, who would not be deceived, or mocked with their lying pretexts and excuſes, and forbiddeth them to deceive or flatter themſelves by thinking otherwiſe; and ſo proceedeth to preſſe the duty of beneficence towards Miniſters, by an argument expreſſed in a ſimilitude taken from ſowers of ſeed, who may expect an increaſe in the time of reaping according to what they have ſown, whether it be much ſeed, or little, good ſeed or bad: So accordingly as mens actions are, whether good or bad, (which are compared to ſeed, *Prov. 11. 18. and 22. 8.*) and more particularly as they imploy their temporal goods (the imploying whereof is alſo compared unto ſowing, *2 Cor. 9. 6.*) whether for good and pious uſes, or for pampering their fleſhly luſts. (as he brancheth forth this ſowing in
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the following 8. verse) so they might expect an answerable reward, or punishment from the Lord, to wit either here, or hereafter; for, thus is the same similitude expounded, *2 Cor. 9. 6, 7, 8. Doct. 1.* As the sin of backwardness in people to bestow any thing for upholding the Gospel in the publick Ministry thereof, is very common, and hath begun early in the Christian Church; So the Minister of Christ, may not upon pretence of modesty, as being unwilling to kyth much in that wherein his particular advantage is any way concerned, suffer this sin to go unreproved more than others; seeing it tendeth so much to the Gospel's prejudice, and that it is excess of modesty which impedeth the practice of a necessary duty: for, *Paul* observing this sin to have been too common, even in his time, doth sharply admonish and rebuke those who were guilty of it, while he saith, *Be not deceived, God is not mocked:* 2. Neglecters of duty, and chiefly of expensive duties, such as is that of giving competent maintenance to the Ministry, are very quick and witty to find out pretexts and excuses to colour their sin, and so to fiele the eyes of those whom they have to do with; and this all, that they may enjoy the profit of sin, and yet eschew the shame and imputation of it before men: for, *Paul* doth here meet with such witty excuses, and with those who made use of them; *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* 3. Though God be alwayes the sinners party, whatever sin he doth commit, *Psal. 51. 4.* yet, seeing Ministers are Christ's Ambassadors, *2 Cor. 5. 20.* and that the contemning or discouraging of them by withholding competent maintenance from them doth so directly tend to the utter overthrow of Religion and decay of all publick Worship; therefore He is in a singular manner party, and will kyth Himself to be so unto all who are guilty of so doing: for, the Apostle representeth the Lord as the party whom they had to deal with, while he saith, *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* 4. Though subtil wits may so excuse their sin, as thereby to cast such a blind before the eyes of men, as they will

hold them innocent, or at least cannot know how to fasten guilt upon them; yet the allseeing eye of God cannot be so sieled: He knoweth the thoughts afar off, *Psa. 139.* -2. and discerneth the very intents of hearts, *Heb. 4.* -12. and therefore cannot be set off with plausible pretexts: for, it is in this respect he saith, *God is not mocked*, as they mocked men by making them give credit unto their lying excuses. 5. Then doth a man most dangerously deceive himself, when he resteth satisfied with this, that he hath conveyed his fraudulent and covetous practises so handsomly that men shall find nothing for which to blame him, as if, because short-sighted man cannot find him out, that therefore he shall escape the accurate search of the allseeing God; for, the Apostle affirmeth they would be decerved, if they did entertain any such thoughts of God; *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* 6. Though men do usually give all that for lost which they bestow for maintaining the Gospel, and for pious uses; yet it is not so, but shall be returned unto them in God's appointed time with increase, if not in things of the same kind, yet in things equivalent to, and better than those: for, so much doth his comparing beneficence of this kind to the seed sown import; *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* 7. The reward which God hath freely promised unto the good works of His People, and more particularly unto their chearfull, liberal and christian beneficence, is not to be despaired of: nor yet the justly deserved judgment denounced against the wicked for their evil works, and chiefly for their niggardly withholding a part of what God hath given unto them from charitable and pious uses, is to be doubted of, though both of them be long deferred: for, both the promised reward and threatned judgment, are compared to the reaping of the harvest, which doth most certainly, though not immediately, follow upon the sowing of the seed; *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* 8. As the faith of a reward to be freely given, according to the promise, unto our works

works of charity and beneficence, is a strong encouragement to fruitfulness in works of that kind ; So it is lawfull for Christians to have an eye to this reward, as a motive whereby to work up their backward hearts unto a willing compliance with expensive duties of that sort : providing, first, it be not looked at as a thing to be merited by their good works, *Rom. 6. 23.* Nor, secondly, as the only or chief motive, *2 Cor. 5. 14.* for, the Apostle by this similitude doth minde them of the promised reward, as an argument exciting them unto beneficence ; *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

Verf. 8. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption : but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

VW^Hat the Apostle spoke generally concerning that proportion which shall be betwixt a man's future reward, and his present work, he doth now, following the same metaphor of sowing and reaping, make it more clear by distinguishing several sorts of sowers, seeds, grounds, and several sorts of harvests answerable to each of those : The plain meaning whereof, is, 1. That carnal and unregenerate men, who take no other care but to spend their wit, strength, time, and particularly their means upon the service of their own fleshly lusts, (such as are reckoned forth, chap. 5. 19, 20.) they shall at last reap no fruit thereby but *corruption*, that is, eternal perdition (for, *corruption* is here opposed unto eternal life) and this they shall reap from the flesh, that is, their own inbred corruption, which, with the sinfull effects thereof, is the true seed of death and perdition. And, secondly, that renewed and spirituall men, who imploy their whole life, study and labour, and particularly their worldly substance for advancing the works of the Spirit, whether in themselves or others, (such as are reckoned forth, chap. 5. 22.) and particularly, for upholding the Gospel and a painful Ministry, they shall

receive the reward of eternal life ; and this from the Spirit, that is, the grace of God in them, which is the true seed of eternity, not by way of merit, as destruction and corruption follow upon the flesh, but from God's mercy and free gift, as the Apostle doth in plain and proper terms put the difference, *Rom. 6. 23.* according to which this metaphorick allegory must be expounded, and may not be set in opposition to it. *Doct. 1.* The whole world are comprized in one of two ranks : they are either sowing to the flesh, living in their unregenerate state, and in slavery to their lusts, whose end shall be perdition ; or, they are sowing to the Spirit, truly regenerate, and employing themselves for the advancing of things spiritual, whose end shall be eternal life ; There is no neutral or midstate : for, *Paul distinguisheth all in these two, He that soweth to his flesh, and he that soweth to the Spirit.* 2. It may be frequently observed, that they who have not an heart to part with any thing of their temporall goods for God and pious uses, but plead present poverty, necessity and fear of future want, when God doth call them to any thing of that kind, are notwithstanding most profuse and lavish in spending their means to make provision for the flesh, and to uphold the beastly lusts thereof ; for, *he that soweth not to the Spirit, soweth to his flesh.* 3. Though carnal men do think their own way the only wisest, while they spend their wit and substance for attaining present profit, pleasure and preferment, and do judge the way of the Godly, but meer folly, while they imploy their strength and means for things spiritual, and such as God's honour is mainly concerned in, and are not attended with an income of worldly advantage, but rather of losse and detriment ; yet the end shall prove, that those who thought themselves only wise men and gainers, have been but meer fools and greatest losers, and that those others, whom they looked upon as madmen and bad managers of their worldly affairs, have been the greatest gainers and wisest adventurers ; for, *he that soweth to his flesh, shall reap corruption ; but he that*
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soweth to the Spirit, shall reap life everlasting. 4. The state of the wicked after death, is a state of corruption, wherein though the substance of their soul and body shall not be annihilated, but shall be upheld unto all eternity by the mighty power of God in the midst of unutterable torments, *Mark 9. 44.* yet all their glory, pleasure and gain wherein they placed their happinesse, and for attaining whereof only, they spent their time and strength, (*Psal. 49. 11.*) shall then be consumed, *2 Pet. 3. 10.* and they themselves made to languish and pine away under the wrath of an highly provoked and then unreconciliable God, *2 Thess. 1. 9.* for, saith he, *The wicked shall reap corruption*, meaning their state after death. 5. The state of the Godly after death shall be a state of life, the life of Grace being then swallowed up and perfected in the life of Glory, which consisteth in perfect freedom from sin and misery, *Eph. 5. 27.* in unconceivable joys, *Psal. 16. 11.* and the full enjoying of God, *1 Job. 3. 2.* which happy state of theirs shall be eternal, they shall never weary nor yet be deprived of it: for, saith he, the Godly *shall reap life everlasting.* 6. Whatever sin a man committeth, it is most properly his own work, as flowing from the root of his own corrupt flesh; but the good which he doth, is not so properly his own as Gods, in so far as it floweth from the Spirit of God and habits of Grace, which were wrought in him by the self-same Spirit, *Philip. 2. 13. Col. 3. 10.* for, speaking of the *flesh*, he setteth it forth by the appropriating Pronoun *his*; *He that soweth to his flesh*; but not so, while he speaketh of the Spirit, *He that soweth to The Spirit*, not to his spirit.

Vers. 9. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

THE Apostle, from what he hath presently spoken of the reward of eternal life, attending those who sow in the Spirit, inferreth the former exhortation propounded, ver. 6. and enlargeth it, by recommending unto them,

according to the sense given of the former similitude, the study of good works, and especially of beneficency in the general, under the name of *well-doing*; whereby he meaneth not only the outward work, but also the doing of it in a right manner, *Mat. 6. 1, &c.* and that they would persevere to the end in that study, notwithstanding of all contrary discouragements, without bafe and cowardly ceding unto them; and inforceth the exhortation by putting it above all question, that they shall gather the fruit which God had promised, though not presently, yet in the *due time*, that is, the time which God doth judge most convenient; but withall, he addeth a condjtion of reaping in due time, required on their part, to wit, if they continued constant in well-doing, even the same unto which he had exhorted them in the former part of the verse. *Doct. 1.* As all men by nature are exceedingly backward from entring the course of well-doing, and especially of exercising beneficency towards those whom God hath ordained to be objects of it, *Mark 10. 21, 22, 23.* So, considering the many discouragements which occur to a man while he is in this course of beneficency, what from his own corruption, what from the unworthinesse, ingratitude and multitude of objects, and what from the coldrise disposition and bad example of others, who are equally if not more able, there is no small propensnesse in all to fit up in that course, and to give it over immediately, or soon after they have entered it: for, *Paul* supposeth such a propensity, and guardeth against it, while he saith, *Let us not be weary of well-doing.* 2. It is not enough that men do so far subject themselves to the authority of God speaking in His Word, as once to enter the way of obedience, and to endure for a season, *Mark 4. 17-* until possibly they attain to a name for piety, *Rev. 3. -1.* or meet with some unexpected discouragement or tentation, *Mark 4. -17.* But, they must also persist in their begun course so long as they have any being, *Psal. 104. 33.* for, saith he, *Let us not be weary in well doing.* 3. That Christians may eye the

the promised reward, and with what provisions they may have their eye upon it, as a motive to obedience and perseverance; (See ver. 7. doct. 8.) for, the Spirit of God doth encourage them from this; *that in due time they should reap.* 4. Though God hath promised a rich reward from free-grace unto His Peoples sincere and willing obedience; yet, He hath reserved the date and time for the actual bestowing of that reward unto Himself; So, that though it be long delayed, yet they have not ground to challenge Him for breach of promise, as sometimes even His dearest Saints under a violent temptation have gone very near to do, *Psal. 77. 8.* for, saith he, *Ye shall reap,* but when? not presently, but *in the due and proper time*, to wit, that which God doth judge to be such. 5. Though God, as said is, doth not limit himself to a determinate time when He will make His People enjoy the wished-for fruits and comfort of their laborious, expensive and long persisted-in obedience; yet the time made choice of by Him for His so doing, whether in this life, or immediatly after death, is alwayes the due and proper time, and hath a fitnessse in it in some respects, all circumstances being well considered, for the bestowing of that mercy beyond any other time: for, he saith, *Ye shall reap in due, or proper time*; the word rendered *time*, signifieth properly an opportune time, the very article or point of time which determineth the fittest opportunity for doing any businessse; and the epithet added, doth intend the signification, as if he had said, *an opportune opportune time, or most opportune time.* 6. That a man may upon just grounds, and with confidence expect the good thing offered and contained in a conditional promise, he must of necessity come up in his practice to that condition and qualification which is called-for in the promise; Hence the Apostle exhorteth them not to weary, because the promise of a reward includeth their not wearying as a condition; *Ye shall reap, if ye faint not:* where by *fainting* we must not understand every slackning and remitting somewhat in our course; for, this
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besalleth sometimes the choicest Saints of God, *Psal. 73* 2, &c. but such a fainting as maketh the fainter totally and finally abandon the wayes of God, which is not incident to the real childe of God, *Mat. 24. 24.*

Verf. 10. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

HE doth yet again repeat, and so closeth the former exhortation unto beneficency, as a conclusion drawn from the former arguments ; And first, he presseth the use-making of the present opportunity which they had of exercising this grace ; which relateth. 1. mainly to the whole time of this life , as that which being ended, all opportunity of doing good by those, who did ever untill then neglect to do good, doth end with it. And 2. to some parts of that time, in which there is more ready accessse unto duties of that kind, than at other times. And secondly, he sheweth the persons unto whom they should do good, first, to all men whomsoever ; next and especially unto those, who, being conjoynd by the ty of one common Confession of Faith in Jesus Christ, are Members of His Church, which is as it were His Household, *1 Tim. 3. 14.* *Doff. 1.* The Minister of Christ who would speak pertinently and edifyingly unto his hearers, must not hand-over-head deliver every Truth as it cometh to his mind without any method, or dependance of purposes ; but, having such a scope proposed unto himself to aim at, whether the illustration and confirmation of a truth, or the inforcing of a duty, or the reprovng of sin, or confutation of error, he would digest in his mind, and accordingly deliver in preaching all his other purpose, so as it may be best subservient unto that scope, whether as illustrations, confirmations from Scripture and Reason, or as motives, helps, cautions , or arguments, &c. Yea, and for the better help of peoples memory, and better carrying along of their attention, with the

the thread of his whole discourse, he would frequently inculcate and re-assume that which is principally intended by him in his discourse, and to which all the other pieces of it are subservient: for, so doth the Apostle propose, ver. 6. the inforcing of beneficency, as the scope he aimeth at, making all he hath said in the following verses one way or other subservient unto it, and doth frequently reiterate the exhortation it self, ver. 6. ver. 9. and here, *As we have opportunity, let us do good.* 2. The servants of Jesus Christ should so presse the duties of beneficency upon others, as not to exoner and keep themselves free from that duty, who ought to be examples unto the Lord's People, as in every duty, so chiefly in those of beneficency, 1 Tim. 4. 12. because People being more averse from such expensive duties than from any other, do more readily snatch at every thing which may excuse their neglect, and will judge no excuse more plausible than that even their Ministers do neglect all duties of that kind; therefore the Apostle, both in the former verse and in this, includeth himself in the exhortation; *Let us not weary,* and, *let us do good,* saith he. 3. As there are some fit opportunities offered unto us by the providence of God for doing our duty in any kind, and especially for this duty of beneficency, such as our meeting with convenient objects, whose necessity calls for our help, Isa. 58. 7. and our being fitted with abilities to do them good, 2 Cor. 8. 14. So because those opportunities are in passing, and being past, will not possibly return; therefore are we to look upon them, as a pressing call from the Lord to set about the duty, and ought without delay or forefellowing, close with that call: for, all this is imported by saying, *As we have opportunity, let us do good,* seeing, as we shew, this opportunity relateth in part to some pieces of our time in this life, in which we have more ready access to the duties of beneficency than at other times, and it hath the force of an argument to presse the duty, as supposing it will not alwayes last. 4. As all opportunities of this kind are confined within the narrow precinct of this

this present life, there being no possibility of doing good in the way which we now do it, or, of being beneficial unto others after this life, the time of repentance, of making sure our election by well-doing, of making our peace with God, is then past, and where the tree falleth there it lyeth; *Eccles. 11. 3.* So, because the time of this life is uncertain (*Jam. 4. 14.*) therefore we ought to bestir our selves in the use-making of the present time, as not knowing how soon our time may end, and all opportunity of doing good come to an end with it: for, so much is imported in the words, as this opportunity doth hold out the whole time of this life, *As, or, while we have opportunity, let us do good.* 5. This duty of beneficency is to be extended unto all men, even our very enemies not excepted, as their necessity doth require, *Exod. 23. 4. 5.* and our own ability may furnish, *2 Cor. 8. 12.* and that because of Gods own example, *Mat. 5. 45.* and the ty of one common nature betwixt them and us, *Isa. 58. 7.* for, saith he, *Let us do good unto all men.* 6. As the Church is God's family and household, whereof He himself is the head and master, (*Eph. 3. 15*) His Ministers are stewards, to dispense the bread of life, (*1 Cor. 4. 1.*) and particular Christians are members of this family, orderly conjoyned and knit together by the profession of one common Faith in Christ Jesus; and therefore the Church is but a small number, a family, even an handfull in comparison of the world, *Luke 12. 32.* And being Christ's family, cannot but be cared and provided-for by Him, *1 Tim. 5. 8.* So the members of this family are in a special manner obliged to love one another, and to evidence their love by being beneficial one to another under their necessities and straits (in which God doth suffer often even those of His own family to fall for their own good, *1 Pet. 1. 6.*) and that as for other reasons, so because of that near relation under which they stand, as being children and domesticks of one family which is the Lord's: for, saith he, *Do good especially unto them who are of the household of faith,* the designation which he giveth them of one household

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containing the force of an argument. 7. There is an order to be kept in the exercise of our beneficency ; And this, first, that it be exercised to those of our own family, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. Secondly, to our parents, 1 *Tim.* 5. 4. Thirdly, to our kindred, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8-. And, fourthly, among strangers, unto those who profess the same Faith with us, and among those, to such who do evidence most the reality of their Faith by the fruits of a good life, 1 *Tim.* 5. 9, 10. And lastly, unto all men whosoever when occasion offereth : for, the Apostle doth expresse the two last links of this order, and thereby giveth ground for searching out the rest from other Scriptures ; *Do good unto all men, but especially to them which are of the household of faith* ; he saith, *especially*, because the comparison is among those who are strangers, and not under any relation of kindred to us.

Verf. 11. *Ye see how large a Letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.*

THE Apostle, in the second part of the Chapter, being to conclude the Epistle, doth first insinuate how much he truly loved them, and desired their salvation, As it appeareth, 1. from his writing so large a Letter to them: 2. from his writing of it with his own hand, whether because his straits were such that he had not a Secretary to write for him, whom he might trust ; or, that he might hereby prevent the calumnies of the false Apostles who might have objected that this Epistle was not *Pauls*, if he had imployed a Secretary or Scribe, as he did in writing his other Epistles (*Rom.* 16. 22.) subscribing the Salutation only with his own hand, 1 *Cor.* 16. 21. 2 *Thess.* 3. 17. So that though he wrote larger Epistles to some other Churches, yet he never wrote with his own hand so large an Epistle unto any Church as unto these Galatians. *Doct.* 1. The Minister of Jesus Christ ought to refuse no toil or pains whereby he may reduce a straying people, and any way advance the good of souls committed to his charge : for, *Paul*, in order to the reclaiming

ing of those Galatians, notwithstanding of his other manifold distractions, and of the eminent hazard wherein he was for the time, doth undergo the great trouble of writing *so large a Letter with his own hand.* 2. It is nothing contrary to christian modesty and sobriety, but very lawfull in it self, and advantagious for the Lord's People that a Minister make known unto them sometimes, (though but sparingly, and as it were occasionally) what great pains he hath been at for bringing about their spiriual good, providing this be not done from ostentation and desire of vain-glory, *2 Cor. 10. 18.* but from a purpose hereby to excite the people to bring forth fruits answerable to his pains: for, in order to this end, the Apostle doth modestly, and as it were on the by, proposed to their consideration what pains he had been at in writing this Epistle; *Ye see, or, consider ye* (for the word will read both wayes) *how large a Letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.* 3. The greater pains are taken upon a people in order to their salvation by Christ's Ministers, they ought to be the more perswaded of their affection and love, and take the greater pains in making use of the labours of such Ministers, for working out their own salvation themselves; otherwise the more laborious Ministers are, the more inexcusable shall people be, and their condemnation the greater, *Mat. 11. 22.* for, the Apostle, to perswade the Galatians how much he loved them, and that they might be excited to bring forth fruits answerable to his pains, doth shew *how large a Letter he had written unto them with his own hand.*

Vers. 12. As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised: only lest they should suffer persecution for the crosse of Christ.

SEcondly, in the Conclusion of the Epistle, the Apostle insinuateth that the false Apostles were not acted from love to those Galatians in their so much urging Circumcision upon them, as a thing without the which they could

would not be saved. whereby they laid upon them a kind of necessity, and constrained them to be circumcised, and sheweth three principles from which they did herein act, two whereof are in this verse; first, from hypocrisie, or a desire to make a fair outward shew of Religion by observing those fleshly and carnal rites, such as Circumcision, difference of meats, legal purifications, and the like, injoynd by the ceremonial Law. Secondly, from pusillanimity, or a politick design to eschew persecution from their Country-men the Jews, and from the Civil Power, at the instigation of the Jews (*Act. 18. 12, 13.*) for preaching the sincere doctrine of the Gospel concerning Christ crucified, which is here called the *Crosse of Christ*: (See chap. 5. ver. 11.) the fury of which persecuters was much abated towards such Christians as did observe the ceremonial Law of *Moses*, the preaching down whereof of any other thing, did inrage them most, chap. 5. 11. *Doct. 1.* Though an external profession of Religion (*Rom. 10. 10.*) and the practice of such external rites (*1 Cor. 11. 24.*) and other ordinances of divine worship as God hath commanded, (*Col. 3. 16.*) are to be made conscience of; yet, when the practice of those external things is opposed to the inward substantial duties of Religion, the former being rested upon without the latter, (*Mat. 15. 8.*) or, when the practiser affecteth a vain shew, and to be reputed religious because of those things, much more than to be religious really and indeed, *Mat. 6. 16.* this is the sin of hypocrisie loathsome both to God and man; and that especially when people affect a shew from the practice of those rites which are not commanded of God: for, this is condemned here in the false Apostles, that they desired to seem exceedingly religious, and to make a fair outward shew of Religion by observing such carnal rites as God had now abolished under the Gospel; *As many as make a fair shew in the flesh*, saith he. It is ordinarily observed, that the zeal of those who are carried away with the spirit of error themselves, and whose great work is to seduce others, doth

doth most run out upon the externals of Religion; thereby affecting a fair shew; and to be reputed as men singular for piety and devotion; that so they may deceive the simple, who take all for gold that glistreth, *Rom. 16. 18.* So those Apostles desired to make a fair shew in the flesh. 3. An erring conscience is of great force, and mightily prevalent with erring persons to make them follow the dictates thereof; It being usual for such to pretend conscience as a reason why they cannot subject themselves to Truth. God in His holy Justice doth give them over to a spirit of delusion; *2 Thess. 2. 11.* and maketh conscience to be their snare, when it imbraceth darknesse for light, *Isa. 5. 20.* and uncessantly vexeth them untill they execute its most unreasonable, irreligious, unnatural and sometimes most blasphemous commands, *Job. 16. 2. Jer. 32. 35.* for, the false Apostles did constrain them to be circumcised, mainly, because by teaching the absolute necessity of Circumcision to Salvation, (*Act. 15. 2.*) they possessed their consciences with that erroneous opinion; and their consciences so misled, did constrain them to follow its dictates. 4. As persecution doth ordinarily follow upon the sincere preaching of the Gospel; So, when persecution for the Gospel waxeth hot, there are usually many found, who, to decline a suffering lot, do tamper with the persecuters of Truth, though not by total apostasie from Truth, yet by coming a great length in making shipwrack of faith and a good conscience, only to gratifie those who persecute the truth, and to break the edge of their rage and fury against themselves: who, notwithstanding, will labour to keep up their credit in the Church of God, as if they were acted from no such politick design, but from a principle of light and conscience: for, so those false Apostles constrained others to be circumcised, pretending conscience for their so doing, when their design was, only lest they should suffer persecution for the crosse of Christ. 5. Though Hereticks and every one who are carried away with a spirit of error, pretend to conscience, as that which they desire

to follow, and dare not contradict in what they hold ; yet very frequently such, especially they who are seducers of others, do but make a pretext and shelter of conscience to cover their pride, politick designs, love to ease in a troublesome time, pusillanimity of spirit, fear of persecution, and a desire of vain glory, by which they are acted more than from any principle of conscience : for, those false Apostles pretended to light and conscience, as the rule of what they did, *Act. 15. 2.* and yet they did it only, saith Paul, *lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ* ; and, *ver. 13. That they may glory in your flesh.* 6. However they who persecute others for Truth do also pretend to conscience, *1st. 66. 5.* yet, they are often found to be men destitute of conscience, and more politick than conscientious, even in those things wherein they pretend most to conscience, in so far as they do dispense with some professors of Truth, if so they come but a little towards them, and comply with them in some things only, though not in all things, as intending hereby to work them up to a greater length in progress of time : for, to the persecuting Jews did not molest those Christians who were circumcised ; though they did otherwise profess faith in the Messiah already come, whom the Jews had crucified ; as is clear from this, *They constrain you to be circumcised ; only, lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.* 7. As a desire to eschew a suffering lot and persecution even for Truth by all lawful means, is no wayes sinful, but commanded, *Mat. 10. 23.* and commendable, *Prov. 22. 3.* So, to dispense with the least Joe of Truth, and to imbrace the smallest of Errors contrary to Truth, that hereby the greatest of sufferings might be eschewed, is blame-worthy, and extreemly sinful ; scing the least of sins hath more of evil in it than the greatest of sufferings, Those are our affliction, but not our sin : for, the Apostle condemneth his adversaries, not that simply they had laboured to eschew persecution, but that they constrained others to be circumcised ; only, *lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.*

Verf. 12. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the Law, but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

THE Apostle, first, maketh good his former charge against his adversaries, to wit, That they urged Circumcision not from zeal to the Law of God, and from conscience, but from a politicke base design; because they made no conscience to keep the Law themselves, that is, neither the moral Law, which they transgressed daily by their wicked and licentious lives, *Philip. 3. 18, 19.* nor yet the ceremonial Law, the keeping whereof they urged so much upon others, but did usually and without challenge neglect it among themselves, and where they knew none were to publish it abroad, *Mat. 23. 4.* Secondly, he mentioneth the third principle from which they were acted in their so vehement urging of Circumcision upon others, even their ambition and desire of vain-glory, that they might have whereof to glory and boast in the multitude of Profelytes among the Gentiles, who received Circumcision in their flesh at their instigation, and thereby did evidence that they were converted, or rather perverted unto Judaism. *Dock. 1.* As we would not lightly, and without evident cause charge any with hypocrisie, dissimulation, and pretending of zeal for God, and respect to conscience, when there is no such thing in reality and truth; So this is ground sufficient for any to suspect, and for those who are otherwise called unto it, to affirm, That they who give little or no evidence of zeal to God, or respect to conscience in the ordinary strain of their conversation, are not acted from zeal and conscience in those particulars wherein they would seem most zealous and conscientious; and more especially, when Ministers do make bold without challenge to neglect those things, the practice whereof they presse most vehemently upon others, it cryeth aloud that they are men destitute of conscience, and that they speak and preach,

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not because they believe, but for other base ends: for, *Paul*, having charged his adversaries with hypocrisie in their so much urging of Circumcision, ver. 12. he giveth a reason for his so doing, to wit, their godlesse conversation and careless neglect of those things which they so much pressed upon others; *For neither they themselves who are circumcised, keep the Law.* 2. The Word of God in the mouthes of His Servants, is quick and powerfull, and sharper than any two-edged sword, so as it entrench in upon a man's very soul and spirit, and maketh that difference appear which is betwixt his false (though fair) pretences, and his real (though foul) intentions, the latter whereof lay lurking under the former; but this searching Word taketh off the visard, and maketh them appear in their foulest colours: for, the Word of God in *Paul's* mouth, discovereth the secret foul intent even of the very hearts of his adversaries, having laid aside their fair pretexts; *They desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh*, saith he. 3. Where the spirit of schism and Church-renting hath once possessed a soul, it causeth the man in whom it is to refuse no pains, trouble, or toil, for gaining of many followers, and to look upon those whom he so gaineth as so many trophees of his victory, and speaking proofs of his unparalleled abilities and parts, wherewith he is so much taken up himself that he cannot dissemble his earnest desire to have all others taken up with admiration at them also: for, those schismatick Church-renters (chap. 4. ver. 17.) did desire, yea (ver. 12.) *constrained men to be circumcised, that they might glory in their flesh.*

Verf. 14. *But God forbid that I should glory save in the crosse of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*

THirdly, in the Conclusion, the Apostle doth oppose his own truly christian and apostolick conversation and carriage to those sins of hypocrisie, carnal policy,

and vain-glory, which he hath shewn to be in the false Apostles: And, first, in opposition to their vain-glory, mentioned, ver. -13. he declareth that the matter of his gloriation and boasting was only in the crosse of Christ, that is, the allsufficient, expiatory and satisfactory sacrifice of Christ upon the Crosse with the whole work of our Redemption, which is also hereby synecdochically understood, and rejecteth all other sorts of boasting, as a thing abominable; for, so much doth his usual expression, *God forbid*, import, *Rom. 3. 4. 6. 31. and 6. 2.* Secondly, he sheweth, in opposition to their hypocrisie and desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, that by Christ, or by His Crosse (for the article in the Greek language may relate to either) the world was crucified to him, that is, all that is in the world, and in so far as it is opposed to the Kingdom of Christ, as honour, riches, pomp, pleasure, the favour, fear, wrath, praise or dispraise of men, all were undervalued and despised by him, to wit, in comparison of Christ and the excellency and worth of His sufferings, *Philip. 3. 8.* and hereby also he ~~was~~ crucified unto the world, that is, undervalued and despised by the men of this world; for, to be crucified in both sentences signifieth the same thing, even to be contemptible and undervalued, as those were who died by that ignominious and cursed death upon the Crosse, *Deut. 21. 23.* *Doct. 1.* It is praise-worthy in a Minister, and advanceth much the conviction of those whose sins he reproveth, when his own carriage is so exemplary, as the holding forth of it may point out their duty, and wherein they come short of their duty: for, the Apostle, having mentioned the sins of his adversaries, ver. 12, 13. doth here hold forth his own practice, wherein, as in a glasse, they and others might see their duty in opposition to those sins; *But God forbid*, saith he, *that I should glory*, &c. 2. Though the goodnesse or badnesse of men, who maintain and labour to propagate opinions, are not sufficient arguments to prove either the truth or falshood of what they maintain; seeing even the Godly may erre, and

and men; otherwise carnal, may discern what is Truth or Error, right or wrong, in some particulars better than they, *2 Sam. 24. 3, 3.* yet, when Truth is already demonstrated to be Truth, and Error to be Error by sound and solid arguments from Scripture and Reason, then is it lawfull and opportune to compare the pious conversation of those who are for Truth, with the impiety, pride, and vain-glory of those who are for Error, that hereby some taking weight may be added unto those former arguments, especially in the minds of those who are prejudged against the Truth; for, the Apostle, in the body of the Epistle having confirmed his own Doctrine, and refuted the Error of his adversaries by solid and nervous reasons, doth now in the conclusion compare his own life with theirs, and opposeth his christian ingenuity and freedom from vain-glory, to their hypocrisie, balennesse and vanity: and this to make his former arguments weigh more with those prejudicate Galatians, as appeared by comparing the two former verses with this and those which follow; *But God forbid that I should glory, &c.* 3. Though it be lawfull in some cases for men to glory in the good things of God bestowed upon them (See ver. 4. doct. 5.) yet it is altogether unlawfully, yea, no lesse than abominable, to glory in any thing, so as that we place our confidence in it, for making us accepted to, and righteous before God, but only the merit and satisfaction of Jesus Christ, the accomplishment whereof was upon the Crosse, *Job. 19. 30.* for, in opposition to the false Apostles their boasting in Circumcision, as the meritorious cause of their Salvation, (See chap. 5. ver. 4. doct. 1.) doth the Apostle here say, *God forbid that I should glory save in the Crosse of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 4. A holy heart, which hath experimentally tasted the worth that is in Christ, cannot easily think upon Him, and especially upon His Satisfaction and Sufferings, but it must be enlarged towards Him, and have high thoughts of that excellency and worth which is in Him, joyned with an earnest desire of a more

near union with Him, and with an acquiescence in Him as its own, if so the heart be already perswaded of interest in Him; yea, and will sometimes expresse those thoughts of Him to the full, when occasion is offered to make any mention of Him: for, so *Paul*, having occasion to speak of Christ, designeth Him so as he expresth not only those high thoughts which he had of His Excellency and worth, while he calleth Him *Lord*, and *Jesus*, and *Christ*, but also the acquiescing of his heart in Him as his own, while he saith, *Our Lord Jesus Christ*.

5. The crosse and sufferings of Christ effectually applied by faith, have that much power and vertue in them, as to make all things worldly, even the very applause and glory of the world, contemptible unto, and to be actually abhorred by a sincere Believer, in so far as the power, terror, beauty, allurements, credit, pleasure, or profit of those things would interpose to mar that high esteem he ought to have of Christ's satisfaction and sufferings, or his right use-making of them, or his seeking after God's glory as the chief end of all his actions, and above all those things: for, in those respects, the world was crucified; or as a dead carrion to *Paul*, wherein he could take no pleasure, and this *by Christ*, and the vertue of His sufferings, and nothing else; *By whom, or, by which crosse, the world is crucified unto me*.

6. The more that high esteem of, and glorying in *Jesus Christ* doth grow in the heart of any, the more will our accompt of all things worldly, being compared with Him and opposed to Him, decay: And where esteem of those things is upon the growing hand, that high accompt which ought to be had of *Jesus Christ* cannot but be decaying much; for, with *Paul*, *I glory in the crosse of Christ and the world is crucified to me*, did go together.

7. As a man truly godly, and renewed by the Spirit of Christ, and in so far as he is renewed, at least, cannot but be unfavoury unto, and vilipended by the world and wicked men in the world; So this also doth come from the death and sufferings of Christ, not indeed, as from a working cause,

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(for, Christ by His death doth work no such malicious disposition in wicked men towards His People) but as from an occasion; for, from those gracious effects flowing from the Spirit of Christ, and wrought in those who are renewed, wicked men do take occasion to hate, abhor, and to take no pleasure in them, no more than they were the dead carriages of some notorious malefactors put to a shamefull death by the hand of Justice; By whom, saith he, *I am crucified unto the world.*

Verf. 15. *For in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.*

HE giveth a reason why he gloried only in the crosse of Christ, and not in those fleshly priviledges, or ordinances, and why the world was crucified unto, and undervalued by him, to wit, because those things which were matter of gloriation to the false Apostles, and by making an outward shew whereof they gained the world's applause (one instance whereof he giveth in *Circumcision*, and illustrateth it by its contrary *uncircumcision*, under which may be comprehended the simple want of this ordinance, and all other things which the uncircumcised Gentiles boasted of, as wealth, wisdom, strength, policy, and whatsoever is glorious in the eyes of the world) all which things he affirmeth to be of no account or worth in Christ Jesus, to wit, so as to make a man accepted of Christ, or to evidence his acceptation by Him, or interest in Him; and withall, sheweth that the new creature, or the renovation of the whole man by God's omnipotent creating power in knowledge, (*Col. 3. 10.*) righteousness and true holiness (*Eph. 4. 24.*) is only that, in opposition to those external and worldly things, which maketh a man acceptable to God in Christ, and especially doth evidence his acceptation by, and interest in Christ. *Dock. 1.* As those things are most applauded unto by men of this world, which are most remote from, and have least relation unto Jesus

Christ, and peoples interest in Him; So for that reason, a godly heart will be more dead unto, and lesse taken up with applause from them, whether he have it or want it: for, *Paul* giveth this for a reason, why the world was crucified unto him. Even that those things which had most of the world's applause, did no wayes evidence a man's interest in Christ, as the new creature did, as appeareth by the causal particle *for*: *For in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision*:

2. Though other things besides the work of Regeneration and saving Grace, such as wealth, honour, wisdom, strength, are of good use for the affairs of this life, *Eccles.* 9. 15. Yet, none of these, nor any other thing else, if separated from the work of saving grace, are of any worth or account to commend us to God, or to evidence a saving interest in Jesus Christ and in those saving benefits which are purchased by Him: for, in this respect he saith, *In Jesus Christ neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision*.

3. As we are so far dead in sins and trespasses, (*Eph.* 2. 1.) that no lesse than almighty creating power is requisite for working of a gracious change in us; So this gracious change, thus wrought, doth reach the whole man; his soul and all the faculties thereof, his body and all the members thereof are renewed and changed; *1 Thess.* 5. 23. for, this gracious change hath the name of a *new creature*, importing it to flow from God's creating power, and that it is extended to the whole man. 4. This gracious change of the whole man is for singular use and advantage to the man who hath it, though not to give him a right to Christ, or to justify him, except in so far as the grace of Faith is included in it; for, Faith alone doth intitle a man to Christ, (*1 Job.* 5. 12, 13.) and justify him, *Gal.* 2. 16. yet to evidence unto his own conscience that he hath that right, and is a justified person, *1 Job.* 3. 7. 14. for, with respect to this, he saith, That *in Jesus Christ a new creature doth avail*, with a little variation of the sense and meaning from that which we gave of almost the same words, chap. 5. ver. 6.

because his scope there is somewhat different from what it is here.

Verf. 16. *And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.*

HE addeth a second reason, whereby he commendeth not only that glorying in the sufferings and satisfaction of Christ as the only sure ground to build our Faith for salvation upon (spoken of, ver. 14.) but also the study of piety, and of becoming a new creature, (whercof, ver. 15.) as the only rule according to which all ought to walk in their several employments. And, secondly, doth excite all men to walk according to this rule, by a most sure prediction and promise of a double fruit to be reaped thereby, even *Peace*, that is, peace with God, peace with their own conscience, and so much of peace one with another, and of sanctified prosperity (which also goeth under the name of peace, *Gen. 28. 21*) as God should see convenient for them, *Psal. 84. 11.* and *Mercy*, that is, God's favour, the fountain of the former peace, which should furnish them with a timely remedy to all their evils and misery. And, thirdly, because the false Apostles did glory much themselves, and boasted up their followers much with this, That they were the only true Israelites, as being joyned to the People of God by Circumcision, to whom those promises did belong; he sheweth that they who followed this rule, though they were not *Israel* according to the flesh, *Rom. 2. 28.* yet they were the *Israel of God*, the only true Israelites, *Job. 1. 47.* as being the children of *Abraham* by faith, chap. 3. 7. for, the particle *and*, in this place, must be exegetick of one and the same thing, as *Eph. 1. 3.* and not copulative of diverse. *Dott. 1.* The rule of a Christian man's walk, whether in relation to faith or manners, is not left indifferent for every man so as he may choose what rule pleaseth him best; neither is it left arbitrary unto any man to impose a rule of walking upon

upon others, but there is a fixt, determinate rule condescended upon by God for all, which no man may either add to, or take from: for, saith he, *As many as walk according to this rule*, meaning a determinate, fixed rule. The word in the original is borrowed from Architects who try their work by rule and square: now, whatever is defective, and requireth addition; or superfluous, and requireth diminution, is not a perfect and just measure or rule. 2. Though this rule and canon of faith and manners be the whole Word of God contained in Scripture, 2 Pet. 1, 19, 20, 21. Yet the grace of Faith in Jesus Christ, and repentance unto life, are a doctrinal sum of this rule, if we mean the Doctrine of Faith and Repentance; or, a practical sum, if we mean the graces themselves; there being no point of Truth taught, and no duty pressed in the whole Scripture which one way or other relateth not to one of these two: for, while he saith, *As many as walk according to this rule*, it is all one upon the matter, whether by the rule he mean the Doctrine contained in the whole Epistle, which is one and the same in substance with the rest of Scripture, or the graces of Faith in Christ, called (ver. 14.) *glorying in the crosse of Christ*, and of repentance unto life, called (ver. 15.) *the new creature*, although it be more probable, he mean the latter. 3. This rule of faith and manners, contained in the Scripture, is unchangeable, and ever to remain as that to which all men in all ages, to the end of the world, ought to make themselves conform: for, the word rendred *walk* in the original, is in the future tense, as relating to all time; *As many as shall walk according to this rule*. 4. So accurate and orderly is this rule in it self, Psal. 119. 96. So ignorant are we of it in many particulars relating both to faith and manners, Psal. 119. 18. And so many and subtil are those tentations which Satan setteth on foot to make us transgresse and slight this rule. Eph. 6. - 11. that there is great necessity of circumspection, accuracy and attention unto those who would rightly walk according to this rule: for, the word rendred

rendred walk, signifieth to walk orderly, attentively, as Souldiers when they keep rank ; *As many as walk according to this rule.* 5 Even those who walk according to this rule, are not so much freed from sin and misery, but they stand in need of mercy ; yea, all their receipts do come in the way, not of merit, but of undeserved mercy ; for, mercy relateth to sin, misery ; and to them that walk according to this rule, there is a promise not only of peace, but also of mercy, and of peace flowing from mercy ; *Peace shall be upon them, and mercy,* saith he. 6. As tender walkers according to this rule may expect sufficient encouragement and reward, even in this life, and such as may counterballance all contrary discouragements and hardships which usually occur in that way ; So their encouragements are not from the world, but from above, descending from Heaven, and therefore such as cannot be hindred by the malice of men : for, *peace shall be upon them, and mercy,* saith he ; the word rendred, *upon them,* is emphatick, and importeth that those blessings fall down upon them from above. 7. It is not sufficient for a Minister of Christ who would comfort and incourage weak Christians (who are otherwise apt to be discouraged through multitude of tentations in their Christian course, *Heb. 12. 12.*) that he find out, and apply such precious Promises as are pertinent to their case, but he must also endeavour their satisfaction in this, that they are in the number of those to whom such promises do belong, and who with God's allowance may lay hold upon them, and draw out that comfort which is contained in them, otherwise the discouraged person will look upon it as presumption to apply any of those precious Promises, *Psal. 77. -2.* though otherwise he most gladly would : for, the Apostle sheweth, that those who walk according to this rule, and to whom he promiseth peace and mercy, are the Israel of God, to whom such Promises were made and do appertain ; *And upon the Israel of God,* saith he.

Verf. 17. *From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.*

THE Apostle (having now sufficiently vindicated his Doctrine, and justified his practice, especially from those calumnies which were spread of him, as if he had preached Circumcision, chap. 5. 11.) doth here by his Apostolical Authority discharge any whomsoever to occasion further trouble to him, or unnecessary diversions from the great work of the Gospel, whether by speaking against his Doctrine, or by spreading, or entertaining calumnies and slanders of him, especially that formerly spoken of; and this because the manifold sufferings which he had endured from the Jews his country-men and others, for his sincere preaching of the Gospel, without any mixture of Jewish Ceremonies (2 Cor. 11. 24.) the marks, scars, or prints whereof, which were yet visible and to be seen in his body, did sufficiently witness and seal the truth of his Doctrine, and especially did abundantly refute that former calumny: for, if he had preached Circumcision, he should not have been so persecuted, chap. 5. 11. and hereby also he opposeth his own practice and courage to the pusillanimity of his adversaries, and their base desire of eschewing a cross for the speaking of truth, ver. -12. *Doch. 1.* Though it be the duty of Ministers to contend for Truth against Error, *Jude, v. -3.* and to wipe off that disgrace which adversaries intend by unjust imputations and calumnies to fasten on their persons, *Rom. 3. 8.* yet the spending of much time in those eristick debates, may create no small trouble and heart-breaking vexation to their spirits, as diverting them exceedingly from that far sweeter, and in some respects far more profitable work both to themselves and others, even of preaching the positive and practicall Truths of the Gospel unto their hearers, and of seeding by meditation upon those Truths themselves: for, *Paul,* speaking of their contradiction to Truth, and calumnies against

against his person, saith, *From hence forth let no man trouble me*; importing his wrestling with those, did by way of unpleasant diversion trouble him, and so as they consumed his strength; for, so much doth the word, rendered *trouble*, signify. 2. When the mouthes of hereticks and slanderers cannot be stopped with reason and fair persuasions, but rather they prove more insolent, it is the duty of those who have authority, wisely to make use of it for putting them to silence: for, so doth *Paul*, having used abundance of reasons and persuasions already by his Apostolick Authority, command, *From hence forth let no man trouble me*. 3. As it is the lot of Christ's most eminent Servants to meet with base and disgracefull usage from raging persecuters, as if they were the basest of slaves, malefactors, and the verie off-scourings of men; So, whatever hard measure His Servants do receive from such, the Lord Christ will look on it as done to Himself; He will own their sufferings, wounds, and skars of those wounds, as His own, and alloweth His suffering Martyrs to look so upon them also, & that because they are inflicted for the profession of His Name, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. and because of that strict union which is betwixt Christ and Believers, whereby He and they are only one mystical Christ, *Eph.* 1. 23. for, *Paul* had received stripes and wounds, the marks whereof did afterwards remain in his flesh; the word signifieth the prints and marks of such stripes as slaves and malefactors used to be beaten with, and those he calleth the marks of Christ; *I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus*. 4. Though men of this world do but judge basely of those who suffer for Christ, and of their sufferings, together with the prints and memorials of their sufferings, as they do judge of the stripes and skars of those who are justly beaten for their faules, *Act.* 24. 5. yet the person who hath suffered, will not be ashamed of, but rather in a holy manner will glory in the very prints and marks of those stripes and wounds which he hath received for the name of Christ: yea, it is the duty of all to think the more honourably

of

of that person, seeing those are the marks of Christ: for Paul doth in a manner boast of those his marks which were imprinted by his persecuters of purpose to disgrace him; *I do bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.*
 5. Though wicked hereticks may suffer much before they renounce their erroneous opinions, So that a man's suffering for his opinion will not presently prove his opinion to be truth; yet when other strong arguments from Scripture and Reason are already made use of by a Preacher to confirm the truth of his Doctrine, this may adde weight to all his other arguments, and argue his sincerity and uprightnesse in the defence of his Doctrine, even that with courage and constancy, and that frequently, he hath sealed the truth of it by his sufferings: for, the Apostle, having already spoken sufficiently in reason for the defence of his Doctrine against his adversaries, doth now make mention of his sufferings for the Truth as an additional argument to stop the mouths of those who did oppose his Doctrine, and question his sincerity in the defence of it; *From henceforth let no man trouble me, saith he; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.*

Verf. 18. *Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.*

Fourthly, the Apostle concludeth the Epistle with his ordinary farewell-wish; wherein, having designed them by the name of *Brethren*, he wisheth that God's grace and favour with all spiritual benefits flowing from it, and purchased and conveyed to them through Jesus Christ (therefore called the *grace of Jesus Christ*) might reside both in the effects and sense of it in their spirits and whole soul, and affixeth his *Amen* as an evidence of fervency and confidence in his wish, and as a confirmation of the whole Doctrine delivered by him in this Epistle. Besides what is already observed upon the like farewell-wish in the close of the Epistles to the *Philippians* and

and *Colossians*, Hence *Learn*, 1. The more of prejudice a Minister doth apprehend to be in a people or person against himself and his doctrine, he ought to endeavour the more by affectionate insinuations, and by frequent and seasonable reiterating of loving compellations, the rooting out of those prejudices : for, besides all the insinuations which he hath used towards, and lovely compellations which he hath given to those Galatians, so much possessed with prejudice against him, chap. 4. 16. he designeth them by the name of *Brethren*, in his farewell-wish, which he doth to no other Church, except to that of *Corinth*, 2 *Cor.* 13. 11. who at that time had deep prejudice against him also ; *Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*. 2. The main thing in people for which Ministers ought to care, and which should be most adverted unto by people themselves, is the spirit and inward man, as that for which God doth mainly call, *Prov.* 23. 26. and being keeped right, will command the outward man and keep it right also, *Prov.* 4. 23. and without the concurrence whereof, all that is done in the service of God, is nothing but detestable hypocrisie, *Mat.* 15. 8. for, the Apostle wisheth the grace of God to be with their spirits, by seating it self there, that it may command the body and all the members thereof from thence, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit*, saith he.

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A brief Exposition of the Epistle of Paul to the *Ephesians*.

THE ARGUMENT.

PAUL, having planted a famous Church at Ephesus, (Act. 19. 1, 10, &c.) a prime City in the lesser Asia, Rev. 1. 11. and having foreseen by the Spirit of prophesie, that though this Church (as appeareth from the strain of the whole Epistle) was for the time free from schism, and constant in the doctrine of the Gospel; yet false teachers in progress of time would arise among them to pervert them, Act. 20. 29, 30. And fearing also, lest his own present sufferings (he being now a prisoner at Rome, chap. 3. 1.) should make them faint and sit up in their christian course, chap. 3. 13. Therefore, and upon these occasions he writeth this Epistle unto them. His scope wherein, is, to excite them unto constancy and further progresse in faith and piety, as appeareth from the subject matter of the whole Epistle, and more especially from chap. 3. 13, &c. and chap. 4. 1. In order to which scope (after the Inscription, ver. 1, 2, chap. 1.) he propoundeth to their view a short sum of the doctrine of faith and salvation by Christ, which he doth several wayes illustrate, commend, extend both to Jew and Gentile, and guard from contempt occasioned by the crosse, exhorting them oftimes indirectly to cleave unto it, and make progresse in the knowledge of it, to the end of chap. 3. After which, he inciteth them to the study and practice of holinesse, both in the general and special duties of a christian life, chap. 4. 5. and to ver. 21. of chap. 6. And so (having recommended some private affairs of his own to the care of Tychicus, ver. 21, 22.) he concludeth the Epistle with almost the same salutation by which he made his entry to it, ver. 23, 24.

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CHAP.

C H A P. I.

IN the first part of this Chapter (after the Inscription, ver. 1, 2.) the Apostle unfoldeth the grounds and causes of the salvation of sinners, ascribing all unto God's free grace in Christ: which he doth, first, generally, by way of thanksgiving unto God, ver. 3. Secondly, more particularly: and first, he treateth of the grounds, causes and means of salvation, as they were prepared in the eternal decree of election; which he describeth from those ends which God intended in that decree, as our sanctification, ver. 4. our adoption or glorification, ver. 5. and the glory of His grace, ver. 6. Next, as they were purchased by Christ in the work of redemption, ver. 7. And lastly, as they are applyed unto the Elect in their effectual calling, ver. 8. which is illustrated from the mean made use of for bringing it about, to wit, the revealing and publishing of the Gospel, ver. 9. and from the end intended by God in the use of this mean, even the gathering together in one of all the scattered Elect, ver. 10. And thirdly, he cleareth yet further the former doctrine concerning the freedom of God's grace through Christ in our salvation, by giving some instances of it, 1. In the believing Jews, ver. 11, 12. Next, in the believing Gentiles, ver. 13, 14.

In the second part of the Chapter, he doth indirectly incite them to constancy and progresse in the knowledge of this doctrine; first, by shewing how he blessed God, and prayed unto Him for them, ver. 15, 16. Secondly, by holding forth a short sum of his prayer unto God on their behalf, even that God would bestow a greater measure of wisdom and saving knowledge upon them, ver. 17, 18-- whereby they might know those good things, which they were to partake of in Heaven, ver. 18. together with the working of Gods mighty power in, and towards Believers, ver. 19. Thirdly, by commending
this

this power of God unto them, from its mighty working in order to Christ's exaltation, ver. 20. which exalted state of Christ, he sheweth, doth include power and superiority over all creatures in general; ver. 21, 22 and over His Church in particular, ver. -22, 23.

Verf. 1. *PAUL an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the Saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithfull in Christ Jesus:*

2. *Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

IN these two Verses is the Inscription of the Epistle, containing, first, a description of the Pen-man; from his name *Paul*, from his office *an Apostle*, and call to his office, *by the will of God*. Secondly, a description of those to whom the Epistle was directed, from the place of their habitation, *at Ephesus*, and their spiritual state, they were *Saints* and *faithfull*, ver. 1. Thirdly, the Apostle's usuall salutation, or comprecation, whereby he prayeth for *grace* and *peace* unto them, ver. 2.

Besides what hath been already observed upon the Inscriptions of the Epistles to the *Galatians*, *Philippians* and *Colossians*, Learn, 1. The wisdom of God hath judged it most convenient to teach His People, not immediately by Himself or by the ministry of Angels, bur of men like unto our selves: hereby to try His Peoples obedience, *Mat. 10. 40.* and because their infirmity could not well endure the ministry of others, *Exod. 20. 19.* For, *Paul* is imploied by God to instruct those Ephesians by writing this Epistle; *Paul an Apostle by the will of God, to the saints.* 2. It doth not follow hence, that every man who thinketh himself sufficiently gifted, may take upon him the office of the Ministry, except he be called unto it of God: for, *Paul* sheweth he was called to the office of an Apostle before he did meddle with it; *An Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.* 3. The power of God not only can, but also frequently doth gather and preserve a Church to

Himself, even where Satan's seat is, and wickednesse of all sorts doth most abound: hereby fulfilling what was long since foretold (*Psal.* 110. 2.) that Christ should rule in the midst of His enemies; for, there was a Church of Saints even at *Ephesus*, a City famous for Idolatry and Witchcrafts, *Act.* 19. v. 19, 24, 34, 35. *To the Saints which are at Ephesus.* 4. Even those who are Saints and Believers, do stand in need of God's grace and favour both to pardon and subdue sin, seeing the best of them are but sanctified in part, *1 Cor.* 13. 12. having the dregs of corruption alwayes remaining, and frequently stirring in them, *Rom.* 7. 23. for, the Apostle's wish in behalf of the Saints at *Ephesus* and faithfull in Christ Jesus, is, *Grace be to you.*

Verf. 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

THe Apostle's scope being to establish those Ephesians in the sincere doctrine of the Gospel already received by them, and for this end to unfold the grounds and causes of their salvation, together with the freedom of God's grace in Christ, upon which salvation (with all its causes, and every step tending towards it) is founded, he doth first propound the grounds and causes in general, and this not warshly and in a coldrise manner, but with an open mouth, and a more enlarged heart, by way of thanksgiving to God, whom he describeth from his twofold relation to Christ, as being *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*: for, the particle *and*, in this place, is not copulative of things different, but exegetick of one and the same thing, as *Psal.* 18. 46. And first, He is a *God* to Christ, chiefly because of the Covenant of Redemption betwixt God and Christ as Mediator, the mutual conditions of which Covenant are, *1s.* 53. 10, 11. *Job.* 6. 39, 40. And, secondly, He is the *Father* of Christ, to wit, not only as Christ is God, by an eternal and unspeakable generation, *Psal.* 2. 7. but also, as Christ is Man,

Man, God is His Father by vertue of the personal union of the two natures in Christ, *Luke 1. 32*---. The reason of which his thanksgiving to God he sheweth to be Gods bestowing of real blessings upon Believers, and those not common or temporal only, but special and *spiritual blessings*, which tend to a spiritual and supernatural end; and those not sparingly, but fully, and with an open hand, even *all blessings*; and this *in heavenly places*, that is, from Heaven His glorious Throne; or, because those spiritual blessings shall not be consummated and fully perfected until Believers be in Heaven: all which blessings, he sheweth are bestowed upon Believers *in Christ*, He, as our Head, Attourney and Advocate (*1 Joh. 2. 1.*) having received those blessings in our name, and for our behoof, *Eph. 2. 6.* by whose merit also they are purchased, *Isa. 53. 5.* In whom, and by vertue of our union with Him and right to Him, we have a right to such of those blessings as we have not yet actually received, *1 Joh. 5. 12.* and do come to the possession of these which we already enjoy, *Joh. 1. 16.* *Doff. 1.* Though we cannot blesse the Lord, as He blesseth us by bestowing real blessings and favours upon us, which before we wanted, *Gen. 24. 35.* there being such a fulnesse of blessednesse in God, as nothing can be superadded, *Joh. 22. 2.* Yet it is our duty to blesse Him so, as that being convinced of that blessednesse, of those excellencies which are in Him, and favours which are bestowed upon us by Him, we do not only esteem highly of Him because of those, *Luke 1. 45.* but also expresse this our high esteem, and that not only in words, whether by speaking to God Himself in the duty of prayer and praise, *Psal. 104. 1.* or by speaking of Him, and to His commendation unto others, *Psal. 34. 3. 4.* &c. but also and mainly in our life and actions, *1 Cor. 10. 31.* for, *Paul* doth here blesse the Lord; *Blessed be God*, saith he. 2. It is a looking to God with respect had to Jesus Christ, which inflameth the heart with such a mixture of love and admiration at His excellencies and worth, that it must of necessity break forth in

blessing of Him : God considered without Christ being
 a consuming fire, to whom there can be no confident ap-
 proaching by sinfull creatures, neither in the duties of
 prayer, nor of praise ; but the vail of Christ's flesh doth
 break the beams of His terror, so that we may stedfastly
 behold His attributes and excellencies, rejoycing in them,
 and blessing Him for them : for, *Paul*, while he blesteth
 God, doth look upon Him through this vail ; *Blessed be*
God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 3. A holy
 soul, truly sensible of his lost condition by nature, and of
 God's mercy in his delivery from that wofull state, can-
 not seriously think, or speak of that subject, but his heart
 must be inflamed with love to God ; yea, and break forth
 in praises and thanksgiving to Him, when occasion of-
 fereth : for, so doth *Paul*, *Blessed be God who hath blessed us*
with all spiritual blessings. 4. Though we are bound to
 blesse the Lord even for temporal favours, and things
 necessary for the life which now is, *Psal.* 107. 8. yet a
 renewed heart is most taken up with, and blesteth God
 most for spiritual blessings, and such as concern our eter-
 nal welbeing, those being not only most durable, *Job.*
 6. 27. but also most discriminating betwixt the regene-
 rate and unregenerate, *Eccles.* 9. 1. *I Job.* 3. 14. for, *Paul*
 blesteth God for these blessings ; *Who hath blessed us with*
all spiritual blessings. 5. God is the author and worker
 of all spiritual blessings in a special manner, in so far as
 He produceth them not by a general providence actua-
 ting and concurring with natural principles and powers
 for producing of such and such effects, (as He is the au-
 thor even of common blessings, health, riches, honour,
 and such like, *Psal.* 75. 6, 7.) but by his special grace,
 whereby He createth in the heart (by nature, dead in sins
 and trespasses, *Eph.* 2. 1.) a power to do good, *Ezek.* 36.
 26. and actuateth that power, making it to work, *Phil.*
 2. 13. for, the Apostle ascribeth the production of all
 spiritual blessings to God, while speaking of God he
 saith, *Who hath blessed us with all spirituall blessings.*
 6. Though God, considered as Creator and merciful up-
 holder

holder of His own creatures, doth bestow temporal blessings upon the world, even upon those who never heard of Christ, *Psal. 17. 14.* yet, spiritual blessings, such as the saving graces of faith, hope and love, come from God, being considered not as Creator, but in, and with relation to Jesus Christ, who behoved to purchase those blessings of new, before fallen man could acquire either a right unto them, or possession of them: for, saith Paul, it is *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings*; and again, *He hath blessed us in Christ.* 7. Spiritual blessings, to wit, those of them which are absolutely necessary to salvation and eternal blessednesse, are linked together, and cannot be separated: where God bestoweth one of those, He bestoweth all there being a necessary concatenation among them all, *Rom. 8. 29, 30.* so that they either co-exist, or at least in God's due time do follow one upon another, *Philip. 1. 6.* for, saith Paul, *He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings.* 8. Though there be some spiritual blessings, such as perfection in holinesse, and the full enjoying of God in glory, the possession whereof is not attained unto by Believers so long as they are here on earth, *1 Cor. 13. 12.* yet, because of the Believer's undoubted right unto those blessings (*1 Cor. 3. 21, 22.*) and God's unchangeable purpose to bestow them, *Psal. 84. 11.* and because of the first fruits and earnest of those blessings already bestowed upon the Believer (See ver. 14.) and of Christ's having taken possession of those in the Believer's name, chap. 2. 6. he may be as much assured of his full enjoying of them, as if he had them already in hand: for, saith Paul, *He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings*, as if all, none being excepted, were already enjoyed. 9. Spirituall blessings are of an heavenly rise and nature, there being no second cause upon earth, or among things created, which doth concur with God in bringing them to passe, as in the production of other natural effects: for, as the word is well rendred, *in heavenly places*, and better than *in heavenly things*; so it seemeth the bestowing of those

spiritual blessings, is ascribed to God in heavenly places, mainly because their original is only from Heaven, and not from earth; *With all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.*

Verf. 4. *According as He hath chosen us in Him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before Him in love.*

THe Apostle, in the second place, treateth of those spiritual blessings more particularly, and so doth branch forth at large that reason of his thanksgiving to God presently mentioned, and this in pursuance of the former scope, which is to shew, that salvation with all its causes do flow only from God's free grace in Christ; that so the Ephesians might be firmly rooted and confirmed in the faith of this Truth. And, first, he speaketh of those blessings as they were prepared and appointed for Believers in God's eternal decree of Election and Predestination, to ver. 7. In this verse he sheweth, first, That these spiritual blessings are bestowed upon Believers in time, not by chance, or rashly, not from any worth in the receiver, but according as God had fore-ordained in His decree of Election, whereby, *before the foundation of the world*, that is, from all eternity (See *Joh. 17. 24.*) He did choose some of mankind to eternal life (*Mat. 25. 34.*) passing by others, and did choose them *in Christ*, not, as if Christ's death had moved God to love and elect; for, His electing love did move Him to give Christ for sinners, *Joh. 3. 16.* Neither did He choose them in Christ, as if they had been considered by God as already in Christ by faith, and that because of their faith thus foreseen, they had been elected by Him; for, so faith should not be a fruit flowing from election, but a condition pre-required in the person to be elected, which doth contradict this same very Scripture, affirming that all spiritual blessings (whereof faith is one) do flow from, and are bestowed according to the decree of Election: He did therefore choose them in Christ, as in Him, whom He did
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in one and the self-same decree choose to be the Head of the Elect, and chief foundation-stone of all that precious building. His own House and Church, *1 Pet. 2. 6.* and by whom that glory, and all things tending to that glory unto which He did choose them, were to be purchased; that so (without doing injury to provoked justice) they might be applied unto, and actually bestowed upon the Elect; for, so is this purpose more clearly expressed, *1 Thess. 5. 9.* Secondly, he illustrateth this decree of Election from the nearest end which God did design to be brought about by it, even the sanctification of the persons elected, whereby they should be rendered *blameless* before men, and sincere and upright before God, and that *in love*, to wit, in the duties of love to their neighbour, flowing from love to God, *Mat. 22. 37, 39.* by which love, as a touchstone, the soundness of their sanctification should be tried. *Doct. 1.* As God from all eternity hath chosen some of mankind, and firmly decreed to bestow upon them eternal life, *Luke 12. 32.* so there are others whom He decreed not to save, but to condemn: In which latter decree, and much more in the former, God hath done nothing unjustly; seeing as sovereign Lord over all the creatures He hath absolute dominion to dispose of them as He pleaseth, *Rom. 9. 19, 20, 21.* and though sin in the reprobate was not the cause of God's decree of reprobation, *Rom. 9. 11, 12, 13.* yet it is the cause of the reprobates condemnation, so that his condemnation is just: for, saith he, *He hath chosen us:* which implyeth, some were not chosen, seeing where all is taken there is no choice. 2. Though no man (except he who hath sinned that unpardonable sin, *Mat. 12. - 32.*) can certainly know he is a reprobate; there being no marks, except that alone, set down in Scripture, by which reprobation can be certainly known; Yet, the Elect may attain to the assured knowledge of their own election, seeing God hath set down in Scripture, the marks and evidences of election, *Job. 6. 37.* and hath promised to give His Spirit unto His own, whereby they may infallibly

libly discern these marks, at least, at sometimes in themselves, *1 Cor. 2. 12.* for; although the Apostle doth pronounce those Ephesians to be elected according to the judgement of charity only, which believeth the best of others, where nothing appears to the contrary, *1 Cor. 13. 7.* yet, he behoved to have some undoubted perswasion of his own election, before he could warrantably conclude himself to be elected, seing not charity, but certain knowledge is the principle from which a man ought to judge of himself, *2 Cor. 13. 5.* *As He hath chosen us in Him,* saith he. 3. Though the doctrine of Election and Reprobation be such, as the unlearned and unstable are apt to wrest and stumble at to their own destruction, *2 Pet. 3. 16.* yet, it is not wholly to be suppressed and locked up in silence from the Lord's People, but would be soberly, and prudently sometimes propounded unto them; and that because of the many and great advantages which may be reaped, not only by the doctrine of election, such as the assurance of salvation, *Rom. 8. 29, 30.* strong incitements unto holinesse, *2 Pet. 1. 10.* and courage under crosses of all sorts, *Rom. 8. 38, 39.* but also by the doctrine of reprobation, as contributing much to promote the salvation of the Elect, by making them hate sin more, *Psal. 119. 119, 120.* and prize the kindnesse and good will of God more, which made choice of them, passing by others as good as they, *Rom. 9. 22, 23.* for, the Apostle propoundeth this doctrine to the whole Church, and insisteth upon it, *According as He hath chosen us in Him, &c.* 4. A selecting love in God is of an old standing, even from all eternity, and therefore most free; there being nothing in the Elect, before they had a being, which might draw His love towards them: So the Lord can, and usually doth keep His purposes and thoughts for good to a people or person for a long time hid, before He do discover them, and make them known: for, He had set His love upon these believing Ephesians from all eternity, which yet lay hid from the beginning of the world, and did not kyth untill their effectual calling; *He hath chosen*

chosen us before the foundation of the world. 5. The Lord bestoweth spiritual blessings in time, according to what He hath inacted in that His eternal decree of election before time; So that every elect soul shall most undoubtedly enjoy those blessings: And all of them (even Faith it self not being excepted) do flow from Election, and are bestowed upon the Elect, because they are elected unto them: for, saith he, *God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, according as He hath chosen us in Him.* 6. God did not choose or elect us, because we were holy, or because He did foresee we would be holy, but that we might be holy; so that neither fore-seen holiness, good-works, nor fore-seen faith, were the causes of Election, but effects and fruits flowing from it: for, saith he, *God hath chosen us that we should be holy.* 7. God hath elected none to enjoy everlasting glory after this, but such as He hath chosen to be holy here: And therefore a man may safely and certainly conclude he hath been elected from all eterniry, if he be sanctified and renewed by the Spirit of holiness in time: and whatever assurance of Election is pretended unto by any who lead an unholy life, it is but a strong delusion, a vain presumption, and no well-grounded perswasion; for, *He hath chosen us,* as to Heaven and glory, so also that *we should be holy.* 8. This real and saving holiness, from which a man may conclude his own Election, is joyned with an honest endeavour after such a conversation as is blameless and obnoxious unto no just reproof from men: It is not only inward and in the heart, but outward also, and in the hand and tongue: for, saith he, *He hath chosen us, that we should be holy and without blame,* to wit, from men, as the word is taken, *Luke 1. 6. 1 Tim. 3. 2. Doct. 9.* Where this real and saving holiness, the fruit of electing love, is, there will not only be a blameless conversation before men, but also sincerity of heart before God, which doth not imply perfection in holiness, (for none should then be holy before Him in this life, *1 King. 8. 46.*) but ingenuity and singleness of spirit, opposit to a double heart and

and hypocrisie, even such ingenuity, as a man dare appeal to God to judge of his honest endeavour after that in reality and in deed, which he pretendeth unto in the wayes of God; for, those words *before Him*, expresse such sincerity of heart, (See 2 *King.* 20. 3. *Psal.* 18. 23.) *We should be holy before Him.* 10. Sound holinesse and sincerity of heart, are most manifested in the duties of love to our neighbour, flowing from our love to God; for, external duties of Religion may be diligently followed, even by hypocrites, *Isa.* 1. 11. And the inward substantial duties thereof are not so easily discerned, neither by others nor yet by our selves, as when they are accompanied with the painfull and conscientious practice of those duties, which love to our neighbour doth enjoyn; for, therefore doth the Apostle give an instance of this holinesse in love, rather than in any other duty; *And without blame before Him in love.*

Verf 5. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

IN this Verse, the Apostle doth first expresse Gods eternal decree of Election, formerly mentioned by another word, to wit, *Predestination*, which setteth forth the same decree and purpose, together with its eternity and extent, not only to the end proposed by God, but to the whole progresse of convenient means, by which the end intended was infallibly to be brought about. Secondly, he further describeth this decree of Election and Predestination from another end, which God designed to be brought about by it. even the *Adoption of children by Jesus Christ*, to be bestowed upon the Elect: whereby is meant not only that begun Adoption which Believers possesse here, *Joh.* 1. 12. and whereby they have a right to the heavenly inheritance, *Rom.* 8. 17. but also and mainly that compleat and perfect Adoption; whereof the Elect shall partake hereafter, even the actual possession of their

their glorious inheritance : See the word so taken *Rom. 8. 23.* He describeth it also from the causes moving God to elect any, or one more than another, which are set down, first, more briefly, *to himself*, it is better rendred in *himself* : whereby are excluded all causes moving God to this act, without Himself. Secondly, more largely and expressly, to wit, God's absolute and sovereign will, swayed with favour and goodwill towards those whom He did choose. *Doct. 1.* God hath not only decreed to set forth the glory of His mercy, by bestowing Heaven and Glory upon some of mankind, *Luke 12. 32.* but, in that same wise and eternal counsel of His, He hath fore-cast and accordingly decreed by what means and helps the person so elected may come to Heaven, and shall undoubtedly obtain it. And therefore none can warrantably expect that this decree of Predestination will bring them to Salvation, if they live in the prophane neglect and contempt of those means which do lead unto it : for, the force and usual acception of the word *predestinated*, is extended to the means as well as to the end ; *Having predestinated us.* 2. No not the Elect themselves are children to God by nature, they are not born sons, but made to be sons by grace and adoption, who before were heirs of hell and children of wrath, *Eph. 2. - 3.* for, a childe by adoption is opposed to a childe by nature ; men are not said to adopt their own children, but strangers, *Exodus 2. 10.* Now God hath *predestinated the Elect unto the adoption of children.* 3. God is graciously pleased in time, not only to call and justify those whom he did choose for Himself before all time, *Rom. 8. 30.* but also to make them partakers of the grace of adoption, whereby a further dignity is put upon them than formerly was, even that being already drawn out of nature to grace in their effectual calling, and reconciled to God in their justification, they are now advanced to the dignity of sons and children to the most High, and have a right to all the priviledges of sons, as the Spirit of Adoption, whereby they cry *Abba, Father, Rom. 8. 15.* fatherly pity from

from God under their infirmities, *Psal.* 103. 13. protection from the rage of enemies, *Prov.* 14. 26. provision and furniture for their straits and necessities, *Mat.* 6. 30, 32. necessary chastisement from God as their Father, *Heb.* 12. 6. and a right to the inheritance of life eternal, *Heb.* 1. 14. not only as they are friends with God, and clothed with a perfect righteousness, which they have by justification, but as God's own sons and heirs; which inheritance, being once possessed, their adoption, which is now but begun, shall be full and compleat, *Rom.* 8. 23. for, saith the Apostle, *He hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children:* 4. Besides those other differences which are betwixt God's adopting of the Elect to be His own Children, and one man's adopting of another to be his son and heir, this is one; Men do adopt children, because they have none of their own, but God doth not adopt the Elect from any such indigence or want, as having a natural Son of His own, even Jesus Christ the only begotten of the Father: for, the Apostle, having spoken of the Adoption of the Elect, doth presently make mention of Jesus Christ the Son of God by nature; *Unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ.* 5. That any of those who are children of wrath by nature, are advanced to that excellent dignity of being Children by adoption to the most High, and of enjoying all the fore-mentioned privileges of children, it is through Jesus Christ the Mediator, in so far as He having purchased Heaven the inheritance of children by His own merit, He hath absolute right and title unto it to bestow it upon whom He pleaseth, *Mat.* 28. 18. And having united the Elect by faith unto Himself, and thereby given them a right and interest in Himself, they not only become the sons of God, *Joh.* 1. 12. but are made heirs and co-heirs with Christ, *Rom.* 8. 17. and so do enjoy a right to the heavenly inheritance through Him: for, saith he, *having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ.* 6. As God hath in His eternal decree of Election firmly resolved and determined to bestow this high privilege
of

of Adoption upon the Elect, both begun Adoption here, and compleat Adoption, or the actual installing of them in Glory hereafter, and by consequence did decree to give them saving Faith also, seeing Adoption floweth from it, and dependeth upon it, *Job. 1. 12.* So, whomsoever He hath decreed to lift up to this high dignity of sons, He hath decreed also to renew their nature, and to make them holy; that so their carriage may be suitable to their state and priviledges: for, saith Paul, (ver. 4.) *He hath chosen us, that we should be holy*; and here, *having predestinated us unto the adoption of children.* 7. All was in God Himself, and nothing without Himself which moved Him to elect and choose those whom He did set His love upon; so that neither fore-seen works, or the right use of natural parts, *Eph. 2. 10.* nor fore-seen faith, *Act. 13. -48.* nor yet the merit of Christ, *1 Joh. 4. 9.* nor outward respects, such as nobility, wisdom, riches, *1 Cor. 1. 26.* yea, nothing present or to come in heaven or earth did move Him to choose any, or one more than another: for, saith he, *God predestinated us in Himself*; whereby are excluded all causes moving God to this act without Himself. 8. God hath absolute power and soveraign right to dispose as He will of all His creatures, even of reasonable creatures; and this not only in their temporary, but also in their eternal concernments: which soveraign will of His, is the supream sinlesse cause why God did elect some to glory; yea, and why He did passe by others, *Rom. 9. 18.* for, the Apostle, condescending upon the reason why God did design some for grace here and glory hereafter, doth pitch upon this soveraign will of His; *According to the good pleasure of His will.* 9. The Lord God hath sweetly tempered His absolute dominion and soveraign will, with rich favour and condescendency towards those whom He did elect: His will to them was good-pleasure and good-will. In so far as when He might have fitted them for destruction as He did the reprobate, *Rom. 9. 22.* or never have given them a being, or but the being of beasts, to be annihilated after death,

death, or have drawn out their life to all eternity upon earth, allowing them some tolerable contentment there; every one whereof would have been a favor, being compared with the state of damned reprobates; yet, His good-will hath been a better will to them, whereby He hath decreed to give unto them a rational being with a short Lease of a miserable life here, and endlesse joys and pleasures at His right hand for evermore, *1 Thess. 4. 17.* for, saith the Apostle, *He hath predestinated us, not simply according to His will, but according to the good pleasure of His will.*

6

Verf. 5, To the praise of the glory of His Grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.

THe Apostle (having already described the decree of Election from two of those ends which God proposed unto Himself to be brought about by it, to wit, the sanctification (ver. 4.) and glorification of the Elect, ver. 5.) doth here in further pursuance of the former scope, mentioned upon ver. 3. first, further describe this decree from a third and supream end which God therein designed most, which is, That as His grace, or freedom of His love toward the Elect, is glorious and praise-worthy in it self, and therefore called *the glory of His Grace*, or His glorious Grace, according to the custom of the Hebrew language: So it might be acknowledged to be such, and set forth as such, especially by the Elect themselves. And, secondly, That he may clear how deservedly this Grace ought to be praised, having already shoven that it was the fountain-cause of our Election before time, ver. 5. he doth now declare that this same grace and good-will in God, is the only cause why God doth in time manifest that His eternal love in the effects thereof, by making the Elect lovely, and fit to be accepted of by God as friends through Jesus Christ the beloved, and by accepting them both in their persons and actions, and being reconciled to them accordingly;

for,

for, the word signifieth both *to make accepted*, and *to accept*. Doct. 1. That grace, free-favour and good-will which God doth manifest in saving of lost sinners, is altogether glorious, as having many and singular excellencies in it. It is an ancient grace, ver. 4. most free, *Hos. 14. 4.* omnipotent, *Job. 12. 32.* and a most liberal grace, *Psal. 84. 11.* and therefore a grace so glorious, that no created understanding can conceive, much lesse tongue can expresse those marvellous, ravishing, and transcendent excellencies which are in it, *Eph. 3. 19.* for, he calleth it *the glory of his grace*, or his glorious grace: 2. It is the duty of all the Elect to praise, admire, and highly to esteem of this glorious grace, and to testifie this their high esteem of it both by word and work, in the whole strain of their life and conversation. This grace being so glorious and praise-worthy in it self, so rich and beneficial towards us, and this duty of praise being all which we can bestow, *Psal. 116. 12, 13.* and God doth call for from us in way of thankfulness for this His glorious grace, *Psal. 50. 15.* for, seeing God in Election did propound to Himself the up-stirring of the Elect to *praise the glory of his grace*, it must needs be their duty to praise it. 3. This eternal decree of Election and Predestination is so contrived, that when it is made known, matter of praise to God's glorious grace is abundantly manifested in it: for, its rise is of grace, preventing all actual or fore-seen worth in those who are elected, (See ver. 4. doct. 6.) and all the midles, whereby the execution of this decree is carried-on to its utmost period, are also of grace, (See ver. 5. doct. 1.) So that all-alongs it breatheth grace, and nothing but grace: for, *He did choose us to the praise of the glory of his grace*; and therefore matter of praise, for grace behoved to be manifested in His choosing of us, when it is revealed, otherwise He should not have taken a convenient mean for bringing about the intended end. 4. That great and supream end, which God intended most to be brought about by this eternal decree of Election, (and to which the other two ends,

formerly mentioned, to wit, the sanctification and glorification of the Elect, are but subordinate means for bringing of it about) was, that hereby Men and Angels might see matter of praise and thanksgiving unto His rich mercy and free-grace, and be excited to set forth the praises thereof accordingly; not, as if He stood in need to have His glory acknowledged, or praised by creatures, nor as if their praising of Him could adde any perfection to Him, who was compleatly glorified in Himself from all eternity, *Job. 17. 5.* but He holdeth forth matter of His own praise, that the Elect may be perfected in praising of Him: for, saith the Apostle, *God hath predestinated us to the praise of the glory of his grace.* 5. There ought to be a sweet concord and harmony betwixt a Ministers doctrine and practice, his hand and tongue would joyntly preach and presse the same Truth; for, so his doctrine shall have greater weight with hearers, when he doth commend and seal the truth of it by his own example and practice; Thus *Paul*, while he is pointing out the duty of the Elect to be the praising of God's glorious grace, he himself is practising this duty; for, as is clear from ver. 3. he is speaking all-alongs of this purpose by way of praise and thanksgiving to God. 6. Though the Elect from all eternity are loved by God with His love of benevolence, whereby he willed good unto them, and decreed to bestow good upon them, ver. 4. Yet there is a love of complacency, or delight in God, whereby He not only willet good unto the persons so beloved, but accepteth of them, acquiesceth in them, as in His own children and friends reconciled to Him, and delighteth Himself in His own graces bestowed upon them, in which respect the Elect, as being children of wrath by nature, are not from eternity beloved of God, nor accepted of by Him; yea, not before they be effectually called, and reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ, *Heb. 11. 6.* for, *Paul* speaketh of Gods making us accepted and lovely, or of His accepting us, as of an action done in time, *Wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*

ved. 7. Whomsoever God hath elected before time, those He accepteth of, and is well pleased with in time, both in their persons and actions, if they be good, having first made them lovely and fit to be accepted of by Him: which He doth by working in them a conformity (both as to their state and actions) with the rule, according to which He doth accept; not the rule prescribed by the Law, which requireth no lesse than a perfect and personall righteousness in order to our acceptation by God, *Gal. 3. 10.* but the rule prescribed by the Gospel, which admitteth the imputed righteousness of a cautioner in place of a perfect personal righteousness whereby our persons are accepted and made lovely to God, *Rom. 5. 19.* and of sincerity in our actions in place of perfection, whereby they are also accepted, *Psal. 119. 6.* for, saith Paul, speaking of the Elect, *He hath made us accepted.* 8. That same grace, free-favour and good-will, which moved God to elect us before time, moveth Him also to make us accepted, lovely and well-pleasing to Himself, and to accept of us in time; whence it followeth, that as the eternal decree of Election was most free, and in nothing dependent on our works; So that work of God, whereby He draweth souls out of nature, cloatheth them with Christ's righteousness, and bestoweth grace upon them, is wholly free also as to us, and cometh only from His most free grace without respect had to any worth of ours: for, saith he, *Wherein, or, in which grace,* whereof he spoke formerly as the fountain-cause of Election, *He hath made us accepted.* 9. Christ is beloved and accepted by the Father, being considered even as Mediator, in so far as that He was sent and intrusted by the Father to discharge that office, *Job. 5. 30.* and carryed Himself in the discharge of it according to what was enjoined by the Father, *Heb. 10. 7.* and did finish all in order to the redemption of the Elect, which He had undertaken to the Father, *Job. 19. 30.* for, the Apostle, speaking of Christ as Mediator, calleth Him *Beloved*; *He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.* 10. Christ as Mediator is so

much beloved of the Father, That all the Elect being once effectually called, are made lovely and acceptable to God through Him; Neither doth God accept of the persons or actions of any, but through Him who is *Jehovah our righteousness*, *Jer. 23. 6.* and being laid hold upon by faith, we who are in our selves unrighteous, are made righteous, *2 Cor. 5. 21.* and the sinfull failings of our best actions hid and covered in Him; So that both our persons and actions are accepted: *For he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.* 11. God's free-grace, and Christ's merit are no wayes inconsistent, but do well agree together as the procuring causes of our acceptation and reconciliation with God: for, though Christ hath purchased a state of favour and friendship unto us by the payment of an equivalent price; yet all cometh from grace unto us, in so far as it was grace in God that made him give his Son to die for us, *Job. 3. 16.* So it was grace in Christ that made him undertake to die in our place, *Job. 10. 18.* And it is no lesse of free-grace, that the price payed by Him is accepted of in our name, *Job. 33. 24.* for, the Apostle doth mention *grace* and Christ's merit, as the joynt causes of our being accepted; *Wherein, or, in which grace he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*

Vers. 7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins; according to the riches of his grace.*

THe Apostle (having already spoken of those spiritual blessings, mentioned *ver. 3.* as they were prepared, and appointed for Believers in God's eternal decree of Election) doth now speak of them, as they were purchased by Christ in that great and marvellous work of redemption, by shewing, first, That Jesus Christ hath given a ransom, even his own blood, in satisfaction to divine justice for our wrongs, whence floweth our redemption from sin, Satan, and God's wrath, which is begun here, *Rom. 6. 22.* and shall be compleated hereafter at the last day, *Rom. 8. 23.* Secondly, he explaineth this great benefit

nefit of redemption by *the forgiveness of our sins* in justification, which is an effect of redemption, as redemption is taken for the laying down of the price by Christ, and a principal part of redemption, as it speaketh our actual delivery and freedom through vertue of that price. Thirdly, he sheweth the impulsive cause which moved God to bestow such a benefit, even the riches of that same grace and free-favour in God formerly spoken of: By all which he carrieth on his main scope, which is, to confirm those Ephesians, that salvation and all the steps leading to it do flow from God's free-grace in Christ.

Doct. 1. All men, the Elect themselves not being excepted, are by nature under slavery and bondage to sin, *Job. 8. 34.* Satan, *Eph. 2. 2.* and to God's wrath, *Job. 3. 36.* for, redemption presupposeth bondage; *In whom we have redemption.* 2. There was no delivery to be had from this bondage by prayer and intreaty, nor by exchange of prisoners, as in wars, nor yet by strong hand and meer force; but by paying of a price, not to Satan, who detaineth the Elect in slavery, as a rigid Tyrant, or mercilesse Jaylor, from whom they are delivered by force, *Heb. 2. -14.* but to God, *Eph. 3. 2.* whose justice was wronged by the sins of the Elect, and therefore behoved to be satisfied: for, *redemption*, according to the force of the original word, is a delivery by ransom and price. 3. Jesus Christ is that Person by whom we have redemption from the fore-mentioned slavery; this work by the counsel of the whole Trinity being put over upon Him, as one, who not only had right both of property to redeem the Elect being His creatures, *Heb. 1. 10.* and of kinred, *Lev. 25. 48.* as being our brother, and of the same nature with us, *Heb. 2. 14.* but was also fitted to be our Redeemer, (a price, to wit, His humane nature being put in his hands to lay down, *Heb. 10. -5.*) and was able to redeem, as being also God, whereby His sufferings, as man, became a ransom of infinit value, *Act. 20. -28.* for, by saying, *In whom*, or, *in Christ we have redemption*, he saith, that we have it by Him. 4. We have

this redemption not only by Christ, but also in him; which holdeth also in forgivenesse of sins; He being the common store-house, wherein the Elect shall have all their spiritual blessings treasured up, even before they take their spiritual being from Him, or get those blessings actually applied unto them; as *Adam's* posterity have their original guiltinesse, whence all actual transgressions flow, treasured up in Him, before they take their natural being from Him, *Rom. 5. 12.* As also because this redemption and the fruits of it are not actually applied to the Elect until they be in Christ, and by faith united to Him, *Job. 3. 36.* for, saith he, *In whom,* meaning Christ, *we have redemption and forgivenesse of sins.* 5. The wrong done to infinit justice by our sin was so great, that nothing performed by Christ could be a sufficient ransom in order to our redemption, except he had crowned all his other actions and sufferings by laying down his life and undergoing a bloody and violent death: for, *We have redemption through his blood,* to wit, not as excluding his former obedience, *Rom. 5. 18, 19.* nor yet his other sufferings, especially his soul-sufferings, *Isa. 53. 10.* but as being the head-stone and compleating of all, *Job. 19. 30. Doct. 6.* Sin is a debt, as being a wrong done against God, obliging the sinner to repair God in his honour, or otherways to underly the wrath of a provoked God for ever, *Rom. 6. 23.* for, the word *forgivenessse*, in the Original, and as it is used in Scripture, is taken from those who are loosed out of a prison for debt; *The forgivenessse of sins.* 7. There is no delivery from this debt of sin, and obligation to wrath because of sin, but by pardon and forgivenessse. It is an infinit debt, and so cannot be satisfied by finit creatures: for, thus doth *Paul* expresse the way how the debt is removed, even by *forgivenessse of sins.* 8. Though the guilt of sin be removed by forgivenessse, and therefore freely, as to us; yet, that sin might be thus freely forgiven with the good leave of provoked justice, forgivenessse of sin was purchased at a dear rate by Christ: for, as we have *redemption through his blood,*

so also *forgivenesse of sins.* 9. Jesus Christ hath this rich treasure of forgivenesse of sins, which he hath bought by his blood, laid up in himself; so that whensoever a sinner sensible of this weighty debt doth lay hold upon Christ by faith, and is thereby ingrafted in Him, his sins are freely pardoned, and his debt remitted: for, *In him, saith he, we have forgivenesse of sins.* 10. As that grace, favour and good-will, which God manifested in the salvation of sinners is a rich, copious and abundant grace; so nothing argueth the riches of this grace more, than that from it do flow such excellent effects, as, the giving of Christ the Son of God to redeem slaves and rebels, together with forgivenesse of sins; they being infinit wrongs, and there being many of them in every pardoned sinner, *Psal. 19. 12.* And those not only ordinary infirmities, but sometimes also heinous transgressions, *Psal. 51. 14.* and yet free-grace pardoneth all, and this not only in one, but in all Believers, in all ages, and doth yet remain as full and overflowing in God, to pardon self-condemned sinners as ever; all which, doth argue no lesse than a copious, rich and abundant grace: for, the Apostle, speaking of grace with relation to those two, *redemption and forgivenesse*, which flow from it, he calleth it a rich grace; *According to the riches of his grace*, saith he.

Verf. 8. *Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.*

THE Apostle doth, thirdly, speak of those spirituall blessings, which were prepared in Election, and purchased in that excellent work of Redemption, as they are conveyed and applyed unto the Elect in their effectual calling, whereby he carryeth-on his fore-mentioned scope, in shewing, That as God did give evident proofs of his free-grace and favour in all the former steps tending to salvation; so he had manifested the abundant riches of his grace in the effectual calling of those Ephesians, in so far as his eternal love, which was before al-

wayeshid in a decree, did no longer contain it self, but overflowed in its effects *towards them, or in them*, as the word may be rendred : which effects, wrought by Gods grace in them, he sheweth to be *all wisdom and prudence*, under which are comprehended all the saving graces of God's Spirit in Believers, if we take, as we safely may take, *wisdom* for the saving knowledge of divine mysteries, and of such religious truths as are only to be believed and fall not under practice ; And *prudence*, for that grace and vertue, whereby we know our respective duties both to God and man, and our actions and practices are ruled and ordered according to the prescript of God's Word : for, so the words are taken, *Col. 1. -9. Doct. 1.* Whosoever are elected from eternity, and for whomsoever Christ did give a ransom to provoked justice in the fulnesse of time, all such in God's due time have the effects of God's eternal love, and of the price payed by Christ applyed unto them, and wrought in them, even the saving graces of God's Spirit : for, upon those Ephesians, who were elected, ver. 4. and redeemed, ver. 7. did God bestow the gracious effects of his eternal love, by working saving grace in them ; *He hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence.* 2. That those spiritual blessings which were prepared for us in Election and purchased in the work of Redemption, are applyed unto us, and we made actually to partake of them, It is the alone work of God in our effectual calling ; there being not so much as either power or goodwill in us, who by nature are dead in sins and trespasses, to accept of Christ, or of any thing purchased by him, untill God do quicken us : for, the Apostle, shewing how the Ephesians were made partakers of those blessings, he ascribeth this work wholly to God, making them but meer patients in it ; *He hath abounded towards us, or in us*, as a full fountain runneth over and watereth the adjacent ground. 3. As the same free-grace, and nothing else, which moved God to elect us before time, and send his Son to redeem us in time, doth make him also
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in our effectual calling to work in us those graces, and to give unto us an actual right to all those spiritual blessings which we were chosen unto, and which were purchased for us ; So nothing lesse than abundant and overflowing grace is hereby made manifest to be in God ; considering that there is not only a simple want of good will, but also an utter averinesse from closing with his gracious offer, *Mat. 23. - 37.* and that not only there is nothing in the Elect before effectual calling more than in the Reprobate, which might move God to bestow those excellent blessings upon them, but also much to scare him from ever meddling with them, *Ezek. 16. 3. &c.* unlesse where sin abounded , grace did much more abound, *Rom. 5. - 20.* for, the Apostle, speaking of God's bestowing grace upon the elect Ephesians, doth ascribe his so doing to his abounding grace ; *Wherein, or, in which grace* (formerly spoken of) *he hath abounded towards us.* 4. All men by nature are destitute of saving wisdom, that is, the saving knowledge of divine mysteries, and things heavenly ; seing there be many such things the light of nature revealeth nothing of, *Mat. 16. 17.* And though the light of Scripture doth reveal them ; yet the natural man cannot look upon them, as real truths, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* and so as throughly to venture his salvation upon them, *Job. 5. 40.* for, he sheweth, that at their effectuall calling God did *abound towards them in wisdom*, importing, that untill then they had it not. 5. Though the Lord doth not bestow upon all, whom he effectually calleth, the same measure of saving knowledge, *1 Cor. 12. 4.* yet he bestoweth upon every one so much as is necessary unto salvation , and as doth serve for an earnest of that full and perfect knowledge of God, which they shall enjoy hereafter : for, saith he, *He hath abounded towards us in wisdom.* 6. All men by nature are also deprived of saving prudence, there being many duties which the natural man cannot be convinced of to be duties, *Mat. 5. 29, 39, 44.* and many things required to the acceptable performance of every duty (*Rom. 14.*

23. *Col. 3. 17.*) the necessity whereof he can be as little convinced of ; but chiefly, there being such impotency, and disorder in his will and affections, that he can least of all practise according to what he knoweth of his duties, *Gen. 6. 5.* for, he sheweth, that at their effectually calling God did *abound towards them in prudence*, thereby importing, that until then they had nothing of that grace. 7. As God bestoweth this grace of prudence in some measure upon every one whom he effectually calleth ; So wisdom and prudence, if they be sanctified and saving, go alwayes together : a man cannot believe well, except he also live well : Though, to speak of them otherwayes, as they are not saving graces, but only civil and moral vertues, they may be and often are separated ; for, *He hath abounded in wisdom and prudence*, saith he. 8. Though God doth not perfect the work of grace in the Elect at the first instant of their conversion, but carryeth it on by degrees towards perfection, until death, *Philip. 1. 6.* yet even then he bestoweth the seeds and habits of every grace and saving vertue upon them. This new man of grace is not lame, nor wanteth any of his members, *Gal. 3. 10.* for, therefore, saith *Paul*, *He hath abounded in all wisdom and prudence.*

Verf. 9. Having made known unto us the myserie of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself.

THe Apostle doth illustrate the former benefit of effectual calling, from the mean which God maketh use of for bringing of it about, to wit, His making known the doctrine of the Gospel, which is here called a Myserie, (as elsewhere, See *Eph. 6. 19. 1 Tim. 3. 16.*) that is, according to the use of the word in Scripture, a religious and sacred secret ; and this also he sheweth doth flow from the same good-pleasure and free-grace formerly spoken of, the manifesting whereof was firmly resolved upon by God in his eternal purpose, being moved

ved by nothing so to do without himself. *Doct. 1.* The Gospel, or doctrine of salvation through free-grace, is a sacred secret, transcending the reach of ordinary knowledge, a very myserie, even such, as nothing could be known of it either by Man or Angels, before it was revealed, *Eph. 3. 10.* and such, as was but sparingly revealed before Christ's incarnation, even to the Jews only, and to some few profelytes, *Psal. 147. 19, 20.* and such as remaineth a thing hid, even after it is revealed, unto natural men whole minds the god of this world hath blinded; So, as though they can discourse of, and preach the Gospel. *Mat. 7. 22.* yet, they do not believe it, *2 Cor. 4. 4.* Yea, and it is a myserie, even to Believers themselves, if their knowledge here be compared with what it shall be hereafter, *1 Cor. 13. 12.* for, by the *myserie of his will*, he understandeth the Gospel, and chiefly, as it was now clearly manifested both to Jew and Gentile, chap. 3. 6. Secondly, this myserie of the Gospel now revealed, containeth and manifesteth God's will concerning the salvation of lost sinners: though not his secret will, or decree, concerning those whom in particular he intendeth to save, *2 Tim. 2. 19.* Yet his revealed will, holding forth the way of our duty, and the course condescended upon, by which, and not other-ways, sinners shall be saved: for, hence it is called *the myserie of his will.* 3. The ordinary mean, whereby God doth call the Elect effectually, and convey the graces of his Spirit unto their gracelesse hearts, is the revelation of the Gospel, and his making of it known, chiefly by the publick preaching thereof, *Rom. 10. 14, 15.* for, the Apostle, having already spoken of God's bestowing all saving grace upon them, doth here condescend upon the mean made use of by him in that work; *Having made known unto us the myserie of his will.* 4. There is nothing which moveth God to reveal his Gospel unto one people, and not to another, or more obscurely to one, and more clearly unto another, but only his own good will and pleasure so to do: neither doth the

the Lord any thing contrary to justice hereby, seeing he is not obliged to send the Gospel unto any, *Rom. II. 35.* and all have more knowledge of God by nature than they make good use of, *Rom. I. 21.* for, this alone is here given as the reason of his making known the myserie of his will even according to his good pleasure. 5. So carefull is God to maintain the interest of his free-grace in our salvation, as being the only supream and fountain-cause thereof; that he thinketh it not sufficient once to assert, in the general, that salvation and all the means and steps tending towards it, do flow from his free-grace, but that this be again and again inculcated, and (all the particular steps which lead to salvation being condescended upon) that his free-grace, favour and good will be held out as the fountain of each step in particular: for, the Apostle doth so, and that by an heavenly and divine artifice, sliding down from one step to another, from Election to Redemption, and from Redemption to effectual calling, and from effectual calling unto God's bestowing the outward mean of salvation, the Gospel; not only ascribing all to God's free-grace, but making grace the mid-link of the chain, whereby he joyneth the severall parts of his discourse together; so, *ver. 8. Wherein he abounded;* and here, *According to the good pleasure of his will, and which he purposed in himself,* as having no cause without himself to set him on work. 6. As the decrees of God are firm, fixed and unchangeable; So he doth nothing in the matter of man's salvation, even to the least circumstance, but what he hath decreed to do: which (as will appear from *ver. 11.*) doth hold in all other things which God doth: for, by God's purpose is meant his eternal decree with respect had to its stability and unchangeableness, there being neither want of fore-sight, nor of power in God to occasion the alteration of his purpose, which are the causes why men are frequently necessitated to alter theirs; and this purpose and decree, is spoken of here as the rule according to which God of his good pleasure

sure did make known the myſterie of his will unto thoſe Ephesians, in order to their ſalvation; *Which he had purpoſed in himſelf*, ſaith he.

Verſ. 10. That in the diſpenſation of the fulneſſe of times, he might gather together in one all things in Chriſt, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.

HERE is the intended effect which God did aim at in His gracious purpoſe of making fully known the myſtery of the Goſpel, both to Jew and Gentile, to wit, That at the full time and ſeaſon, which God had diſpenſed, meaſured out, and pitched upon, as moſt fitting for the buſineſſe in hand, (to wit, the time of Chriſt's incarnation and ſufferings, *Gal. 4. 4.*) He might gather together in Chriſt all His own Elect (whether already glorified or yet upon earth) who before were ſeparated from God, and one from another, and might make them *one* with God, being united with Chriſt their head by faith, *Eph. 3. 17.*, and *one* among themſelves, being united by love, *Col. 3. 14.* Now, the Apoſtle affirmeth this gathering of all the Elect, was to be in the fulneſſe of times: for, though many of them were already actually gathered and glorified, to wit, the things in Heaven before that time; yet the exhibition of that, by vertue whereof they were gathered, was at, and not before that time, to wit, the time of Chriſt's incarnation, obedience and ſufferings, *Heb. 9. 15.* *Doct. 1.* All mankind by nature, and being conſidered in themſelves, are under a fearfull diſſipation and ſcattering: Sin hath rent and ſeparated them from God, from man, and from the bleſſed Angels: for, gathering preſuppoſeth a foregoing ſcattering; and the word rendred *gather together in one*, being taken from a word which ſignifieth the head of a natural body, or a ſhort ſum of a ſparſe diſcourſe, and ſo ſignifying here to gather together under one head, to wit, Chriſt, and unto one ſum and body amongſt themſelves, it ſuppoſeth that they are ſeparated from God, from Chriſt

Christ, one from another, and from the Angels also; for, they were to be gathered into one body with those; *That he might gather together in one, &c.* 2. The Lord hath not left all mankind in this wofull separation and scattered condition: but, as He hath firmly purposed and decreed from all eternity; so in time He setteth about to gather together some of scattered mankind, and to unite them to Himself, one to another, and to the blessed Angels: for, the word rendred to *gather*, implyeth a gathering unto all these, as is said; *And he hath purposed in himself; --that he might gather together in one.* 3. The gathering together of the scattered Elect, and making of them one with God and among themselves, doth not depend upon the choice of their own free-will, which could do no other but refuse to be gathered, *Mat. 23. 37.* and so Christ should not have seen of the travel of His soul and been satisfied, contrary to what is promised, *Isa. 53. 11.* But upon the fixed and unchangeable purpose of God, which engageth His Omnipotency to make them willing to be gathered, *Psal. 110. 3.* and therefore they shall be infallibly gathered: for, the Apostle, as appears from the context, maketh this gathering depend on Gods purpose; *He hath purposed in himself, --that he might gather together in one.* 4. It is only God, who by His omnipotent power doth gather together the scattered Elect, and maketh them one with Himself, and with one another in Himself. We do so much love to wander, *Jer. 14. 10.* that we would live and die estranged from God, if the Lord by strong-hand did not reclaim us from our wandrings, for, saith *Paul*, *He hath purposed in himself, --that he might gather together in one.* 5. The preaching of the Gospel, and making known that blessed myserie, is the mean which God maketh use of in this work of gathering the scattered Elect: because, though our actuall gathering be an act of Gods omnipotent power; yet He dealeth with us as with rational creatures, by giving us an offer of His friendship, commanding us to accept of it as it is offered, and in the mean time sending forth

forth his power with the command, whereby He maketh us to accept, *Act. 16. 14.* for, as is clear from the connexion, God's end intended in making known the mysterie of his will, is, *That he might gather together in one.* 6. As God is the great Master of his own House and Family, which is the Church, to whom He dispenseth and distributeth all her mercies, comforts and crosses with no lesse; yea, with infinitely greater care, wisdom and foresight, than any man doth care, provide for, and govern his own family; So, among other things, He dispenseth and ordereth times and seasons for his Church, as not only having fixed in his eternal counsel the general periods of the Churches time, how long the Church should be in her state of infancy, how long under the bondage of the Law, and how long she shall continue in her more grown and perfect age under the Gospel; but also the time and season for bestowing of particular mercies, and inflicting corrections and chastisements: for, the word rendred *dispensation*, signifieth the way of administering the affairs of the family by the master thereof, and the *times* come under those things, which are administered by God; *That in the dispensation of the fulnesse of times.* 7. As every time chosen of God for bestowing of any mercy, is the full and fittest time for his bestowing of it; So the time of Christ's incarnation is in a speciall manner the full time, and fulnesse of time; and that not only because it was that full time which God had appointed in his decree, and, for reasons known to his own unsearchable wisdom, condescended upon as the most fitting time for that great work; but also, because all the fore-going prophecies, promises and types of the Messias, were fulfilled in those times, *Luke 24. 27.* and the will of God concerning man's salvation was then, and not till then fully revealed, *Heb. 1. 2.* for, the Apostle calleth those times, *the fulnesse of times*; *That in the dispensation of the fulness of times.* 8. Though the benefits purchased by Christ, and particularly that of effectually calling, and gathering together unto God those whom
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sin did separate from Him, be intended for, and accordingly doth light only upon few, *Mat. 7. 14.* Yet the Gospel, and Promise, by which Christ and the benefits purchased by Him are revealed, is drawn up in the most comprehensive expressions: And this of purpose, that none may hereby be excluded from laying hold upon that gracious offer, but such as do exclude themselves, *Job. 5. 40.* for, saith he, *That he might gather together in one all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth:* by which broad expressions are meant only the Elect (for there is an universality and world even of those, *2 Cor. 5. 19.*) and not all the creatures, not Devils or Reprobates, *Job. 17. 9.* yea, to speak properly, nor yet the elect Angels, who being never separated from God by sin, cannot be gathered to him by Christ, though they may improperly and in some respects be said to be so; to wit, because of those advantages which they have by Christ, as that they are now most perfectly and inseparably united with God, without hazard of being separated from Him, *Mat. 18. 10.* and have attained the knowledge of that wonderfull plot of Man's Salvation through Jesus Christ, which was a myserie even to them, *Eph. 3. 10.* and a greater measure of joy than formerly they had, upon Christ's converting and saving of lost sinners, *Luke 15. 7, 10.* *Doct. 9* All who belong to God's purpose of Election, and who are, or shall be gathered together in Christ, are either in heaven or earth: *Paul* knew no purgatory, or third place for the souls of the Elect to go unto after death, to endure the temporal punishment due to their sin: for, he divideth those *all things*, which were to be gathered, into *things in heaven,* and *things on earth.* 10. There is an union betwixt the Saints departed now in heaven, and those who are yet alive upon the earth, so as they make up one mystical body under one head, Christ, to whom the Saints departed are united (though not by faith, *1 Cor. 13. 10.*) yet by sense, as we are united to Him by faith: and as they are united to Christ, so also one to another, and to us by love:

love: for charity never faileth, *1 Cor.* 13. 8. from which union there floweth a communion betwixt them and us, whereby they do pray for the Church in general, *Rev.* 6. 10. (though not for the particular conditions and persons of men upon earth, whereof they are ignorant, *Isa.* 63. 16.) and the Godly upon earth do in heart and affection converse with them in heaven, *Philip.* 3. 20. desiring continually to be dissolved and to be with Christ; *Philip.* 1. 23. (though they are not to pray unto them, or give them religious worship, *Rev.* 19. 10.) for, saith he, *That in the dispensation of the fulnesse of times, he might gather together in one, things in heaven, and things on earth.* 11. Jesus Christ is that person, in, and by whom we are gathered together unto God by faith in Him, and to the Angels, and also among our selves by the grace of love; He having united the two dissentient parties, God and man, in His own Person, *Mat.* 1. -23. and having satisfied justice for that wrong which caused the rent, *Isa.* 53. 5. and working in us by His Spirit those graces of faith and love, whereby we are made one with God and among our selves, *Act.* 5. 31. and having by His death taken away that wall of partition and enmity which was betwixt Jew and Gentile, *Eph.* 2. 14, 15, 16. it being also necessary that we be in Him by faith, before we be united to God through Him; for, the Apostle is so much delighted with this Truth himself, and would so gladly have it well known & believed by others, that he doth inculcate it twice in this one vers. *That he might gather together all things in Christ, and again even in Him.*

Vers. 11. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

12. That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

THe Apostle, having hitherto spoken of all the Elect in general, doth now make application of the former doctrine,

doctrine, first, to the Jews, and next to the Gentiles; and hereby he doth yet further, and thirdly, inforce the fore-mentioned scope, while he sheweth in effect, that the prerogative of the Jews above the Gentiles made not grace the lesse free to them, and that nothing which the Gentiles could pretend to beyond the Jews, made it lesse free to them either. And, first, he applyeth it unto the Jews, whereof *Paul* was one; and therefore he speaketh of them in the first person, *We*. And, first, he sheweth, that they, to wit, Believers among them (as is explained, ver. -12.) had, in Christ and by vertue of His merit and intercession, obtained an inheritance, to wit, of Heaven and Glory, *Col. 1. 12.* and by consequence, all the fore-mentioned blessings which lead to it; and this not from their own merit or free choice, but freely, and as it were by lot, wherein least of man is seen: for, the word signifieth, *to obtain an inheritance by lot*, in allusion to the division of the land of *Canaan* among the Tribes, which was by lot, *Josh. 14. 2.* Secondly, he sheweth the reason why they had obtained this inheritance, not their own worth; but because God had predestinated them to it in His unchangeable decree of Election: and withall doth clear, that God did call them freely and according to His purpose to the enjoying of this inheritance, because He worketh all things according to his most wise and free purpose, and therefore this also, ver. 11. And, thirdly, he expresseth the end which the Lord proposed to Himself in calling them to enjoy this inheritance, even that thereby His glorious Attributes, manifested in that work might be acknowledged and praised, especially by them whom He had called; whom he describeth from this, that they were the first who trusted or hoped in Christ: for, as the Gospel was first preached among the Jews, *Mat. 10. 6. Act. 13. 46.* so, many among them did imbrace the Gospel, and were converted by it at the first, and before there were any considerable number of Converts among the Gentiles, ver. 12.

• From Vers. 11. *Learn, 1.* It is the duty of Christian Ministers,

nisters, as to preach sound doctrine, so to make prudent application thereof to the several sorts and conditions of hearers: for, the life of preaching, is, impertinent and lively application, in so far as if the Word be left unapplied by the Preacher, People will either not apply it at all, or otherwise misapply it, by taking to themselves that which belongeth not to them: therefore the Apostle, having spoken of the freedom of Gods grace towards all the Elect in general, doth make particular instance of the freedom of it, first, in the Jews here, and next, in the Gentiles, ver. 13, 14. *In whom also we have obtained.* 2. As Believers are God's portion and part of the world, even the lot of His inheritance; so they do obtain from Him a lot and share in an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for them, 1 Pet. 1. 4. for, the word, rendred *we have obtained an inheritance*, may either signifie, that they were taken for a lot and inheritance passively, or that they had gotten a lot and inheritance actively. 3. Every Believer hath already obtained this glorious, excellent and heavenly inheritance, though not in personal compleat possession, 2 Cor. 5. 6. yet, by right (Job. 3. 16.) in begun possession (Job. 17. 2, 3.) and by compleat possession in their head Christ, Eph. 2. 6. for, the Apostle speaketh in the bypast time, *We have obtained an inheritance.* 4. This heavenly inheritance doth come to believers not by their own merit or worth, but freely and without their deserving or choice, as those things which come by lot: All the causes bringing it about, whether God's eternall electing love, or Christ's merit and the application of it, are free as to us, and were set on work without any active influence as from us; for, as we shew, the word signifieth *to obtain by lot*, and therefore freely; *We have obtained an inheritance.* 5. Jesus Christ the Mediator is that person, in whom Believers have this heavenly inheritance: as they have all their other spiritual blessings leading to heaven in Him; so also heaven it self. He hath purchased it, Heb. 9. 12. He maketh us lay hold upon it,

27

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by faith, when it is offered in the promise, *Job. 12. 32.* we must be in Him before we get a right to it, and therefore He is the way to heaven, *Job. 14. 6.* He hath taken possession of heaven in our name, as our Attorney, *Job. 14. 2, 3.* for, saith he, *In whom*, which relateth to Christ, *we have obtained an inheritance.* 6. Those, who seem the worthiest people of any other, do come to heaven no other way than the most unworthy, that is, freely, and as it were by lot: for, he saith, *We also*, that is, even we Jews, who might seem to have somewhat whereon to rely in our selves, *have obtained an inheritance freely.* 7. As none come to heaven, but such as are from eternity predestinated to it by God; So all those things, whether they be mercies, (*Gen. 50. 20.*) or crosses, (*Amos 3. -6.*) which come as it were by chance to us, or without our foresight, are well foreseen, and wisely ordered by God: for, he mentioneth Predestination, and God's purpose to bestow this inheritance, which came to them, as it were by lot, and without their foresight; *We have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose.* 8. The providence of God is extended to all things whatsoever, neither is there any thing which falleth not under His efficacious working: He not only gave a being unto all things created at the beginning, *Gen. 1. 1.* but doth continue them in their being, *Heb. 1. 3.* and concurrerh with all the second causes in their working, *Act. 17. 28.* yet so, as God is not the author of sin: because, though the real action, to which sin adhereth, be from God, *Job 1. -21.* yet, the deformity of that action, in so far as it is a transgression of the Law, seeing it is not a real being, but a deficiency from being; no real effect, but a defect, Therefore it is not from God, but from the sinner only: for, saith he, speaking of God, *Who worketh all things*: which cannot be restricted to the fore-mentioned blessings, but must be extended to all things whatsoever, seeing it is clear the Apostle doth argue from the general to the particular, *He worketh all things* so, and therefore those things also. 9. As God is an absolute worker,

worker, sovereign Lord of all His actions, and bound to give a reason unto none for what He doth, His will being His only rule by which He worketh ; So His will is alwayes joynd with, and founded upon the light of counsel and wisdom ; and therefore He can will nothing but what is equitable and just : for, the Apostle holdeth forth those two principles, from which God's working doth flow, infinit wisdom, pointed at in the word *counsel*, and absolute freedom and sovereignty over His actions, pointed at in the word *will* ; *Who worketh all things according to the counsel of his will.* 10. As God doth in time work all things ; so from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his will, He hath ordained whatever cometh to passe : Yet so, as violence is not thereby offered to the will of the creatures, nor the liberty of second causes, especially of the wills of men and Angels, taken away, but rather established, *Act. 2. 23.* and *4. 27. 28.* for, saith he, *Who worketh all things according to the counsel of his will*, that is, as He hath most wisely and freely decreed. 11. Though counsel and advice be ascribed to God in his decrees and works, in so far as there is nothing willed or wrought by Him, but what is well, wisely and most righteously done ; yet, we would advert, lest we attribute to God upon this ground any thing favouring of imperfection, as if He did consult or deliberate concerning things to be done, as men do from ignorance, or doubtfulness of what is most convenient, and therefore do, first, consult and advise about the best expedient, and then make choice accordingly ; There is no such doubtfull inquisition, or previous deliberation in God in order to his working ; His will alone is instead of all counsel and deliberation, seeing his most holy will hath all equity, wisdom and righteousness joynd with it, so that there is nothing more required to make an action be well, wisely and advisedly done, than that it be willed of God : for, the Apostle saith not, *He worketh all things according to the will of his counsel*, as if counsel and deliberation went before, and the choice of the will

followed after; but, *after the counsel of his will*, shewing, that His willing of a thing to be done, is in place of all further consultation about it.

From Vers. 12. *Learn*, 1. As God's giving grace unto gracelesse sinners, His drawing them out of nature to the state of grace, and bestowing the heavenly inheritance upon them, is a work which setteth forth the glory of God's most excellent Attributes, of mercy, goodnesse, justice, power and beneficence, and giveth occasions unto beholders to set forth his praise in all those, though the man himself upon whom this work is wrought, were silent, the very work should speak for it self; So it is the duty of those especially, whom God hath so dealt with, to take occasion from his gracious work in them to set forth the praises of Him, who hath called them out of darknesse to his marvellous light, 1 *Pet.* 2. - 9. They are not alwayes to dwell upon complaints of themselves, but sometimes would mount up in the high thoughts of His commendation and praises: for, this is the end designed by God in calling them to obtain this inheritance, *even that we should be to the praise of his glory*: which words may be taken both passively, the praise of His glory was to be manifested in them, and actively they themselves were to set forth His praises, 2. The more early a man doth close with Christ and imbrace Him by faith, as He is offered in the Gospel, the lesse he doth protract and delay his so doing, the more of praise to God's glorious Attributes is manifested in him, and the more of obligation doth ly upon him to set forth God's praises, who hath so early broken the yoke of his slavery to sin and Satan: for, their trusting, and first trusting in Christ before others, is spoken of as a mean conducing to His praise, and engaging them to it; *That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ*. 3. That any do believe in Christ at all, and that some do believe in Him sooner, and others later, dependeth not upon any difference in the persons themselves, but upon God's purpose, counsel and good pleasure: for, their trusting,

and

and first trusting before others, is subservient to the end, which was proposed by God, to wit, the praise of His glory. Now, the necessary means, and the end intended, do depend upon one and the same purpose, so that if God have decreed the end, He must also have decreed the means tending to that end; *That we might be to his praise, who first trusted in Christ.* 4. The Gospel, when it is preached to a People, though never so godlesse and obdured, will not want its own saving fruits among some of those to whom it is preached: God useth not to send His Gospel unto a People of purpose to harden all, and to make them inexcusable; but because there are some belonging unto the election of grace, who are to be converted by it: for, as the Gospel was to be preached first to the Jews, because of the promise made to the fathers, *Rom. 15. 8.* So when it was preached it wanted not fruits among them, though they were a People to be cast off, enemies unto all good, had crucified the Lord Jesus, *1 Thess. 2. 15, 16.* for, they were of those Jews *who first trusted in Christ.* 5. It is no small privilege for any, wether person or people, to be trusters in Christ, before others, it is a matter of their commendation, *Rom. 16. -5.* it glorifieth God, in so far, as their example and experience may prove an encouraging motive unto others, *1 Tim. 1. 16.* it carryeth with it several advantages: for, the sooner a man doth close with Christ, he will get that work done the more easily, he is the sooner freed from slavery to Satan and his own lusts, he is the sooner capacitated to do the more service to God, and his great concerns are the sooner out of hazards: for, *Paul* maketh it a prerogative and privilege, which the Jews had beyond the Gentiles, even *that they first trusted or hoped in Christ.*

- Verf. 13. In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,
 14. Which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.

THE Apostle applyeth the former doctrine, in the second place, to the believing Gentiles in the person of those Ephesians, That hereby he may shew they were as much in the debt of God's free-grace for salvation, as the believing Jews. In order to which he holdeth forth, first, the benefit which they had received from Christ, even the same which he shew was bestowed upon the believing Jews, to wit, the heavenly inheritance, and all those other spiritual blessings which lead to it: for, as it is necessary that some word be added to the beginning of this verse for making good sense; so it seemeth the word, *trusted*, taken from the close of ver. 12: cannot be it: for, the word rendred there, *first trusted*, is but one in the Original, and cannot be applyed unto the Gentiles, as not being the first who trusted in Christ; And therefore it is safer, and more apposit also unto the Apostle's scope to repeat that word (which is v. 11.) *have obtained an inheritance*, especially seing he is applying here to the Gentiles, what he had applyed there to the Jews; the principal part whereof, and that upon which all the rest spoken of there doth depend, is their obtaining an inheritance. Secondly, he setteth forth the mean whereby they obtained this excellent benefit, even their hearing of the doctrine of the Gospel, which he describeth from its excellent nature, as being the *Word of Truth*, and from that great good which it revealeth and offereth, even *salvation*. Thirdly, he mentioneth a work of God's holy Spirit upon their hearts after they had believed, which is here called *sealing*, by a metaphor taken from the use of Seals

Seals and Signets among men, which are chiefly used for putting a difference betwixt true Writs, and those which are counterfeit; so that this work here called *sealing*, did serve to evidence the truth and reality of somewhat which might otherwise have been questioned, and particularly, with relation to the Apostle's present scope, it did serve to evidence the reality of their right to the glorious inheritance, the truths of the Gospel, and the sincerity of their closing with, and believing of, the Gospel: now the work of God's Spirit, which maketh all this evident, and therefore hath the name of *sealing*, is mainly His renewing and sanctifying work, and especially His carrying-on of that work, whereby He imprinteth the image of Himself, which is holiness (*Eph. 4. 24.*) upon Believers, as an impression of the draughts and lineaments of the Seal, are by sealing put upon the thing sealed; so, *2 Tim. 2. 19.* the grace of sanctification and departing from evil is called a Seal, though those other works of God's Spirit in Believers, whereby He giveth them sense of His presence, comfort and joy unspeakable flowing from it, and full assurance, may be looked upon as lesse principal parts of this Seal. Fourthly, (ver. 14.) by the metaphor of an *earnest*, which is used among Merchants for ratifying of their bargains, he sheweth a use, for which the bestowing of the holy Spirit upon them, and His sealing of them by His sanctifying grace, did serve, even to be an earnest of the heavenly inheritance, the full possession whereof being delayed until the last day, God gave unto them His holy Spirit with His saving graces, as an earnest, or some small beginnings, and a part of that glory which shall then be revealed; that hereby He might assure them of their obtaining the whole in due season. Fifthly, he sheweth the date and time how long they were to content themselves with the earnest, even untill the redemption of the purchased possession, that is, untill the day of judgment, at which time those who are purchased by the blood of Christ, and are His possession and peculiar people, shall obtain

obtain compleat redemption and full delivery from sin and misery; In which sense redemption is taken, *Rom.* 8. 23. And sixthly, he sheweth the end which God purposed unto Himself in all this, even the same which he mentioned formerly, ver. 12- to wit, *the praise of His Glory.*

From the benefit which those Gentiles received, (besides what is marked upon the parallel place, ver. 11-) *Learn, 1.* Though it was the prerogative of the Jews above the Gentiles that Christ was first preached unto them, and accordingly some of them did first trust in Him, (See ver. -12.) yet God hath made both Jew and Gentile equally to partake of all other things, as well of those which concern salvation it self, as of the means and way of attaining to it: for, the same Christ, the same free-gifted inheritance through Christ, and the same Gospel which was bestowed upon the Jews, are also bestowed upon the believing Gentiles; *in whom ye also have obtained an inheritance*, saith he. 2. It is a thing highly observable, and much to be taken notice of, that the Gentiles, who were profane dogs, (*Mat.* 15. 26.) not a people, (*Deut.* 32. 21.) without God, (chap. 2. ver. -12.) should be set down at the childrens table, and have full access to free-grace and salvation, and all spiritual blessings tending to salvation equally with the Jews, who were God's only People, separated to Him above all People, *Exod.* 19. 5. to whom did pertain the Adoption, Glory, Covenants, &c. *Rom.* 9. 4. for, Paul cannot speak of this without an *also*, which is a note of exaggeration, and heightneth the purpose, as a thing very observable; *In whom ye also have obtained an inheritance.*

From the mean whereby they attained this excellent benefit, *Learn, 1.* The hearing of the Gospel, which supposeth the publick preaching of it, (*Rom.* 10. 14.) is the ordinary mean whereby faith is wrought, and consequently a right is conveyed unto the heavenly inheritance, in so far as the Gospel so preached doth not only propound and make known to the understanding the ob-

ject of saving faith, which was before hid ; but the Lord also, at, or after the hearing of this Gospel preached, doth work the grace of faith in the hearts of the Elect, *Act. 16. 14.* for, saith he, *Ye obtained an inheritance, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel.* 2. The Gospel is the Word of Truth, not only because it containeth nothing but truth, (for, so the whole Scripture is the Word of Truth, *Psal. 19. -9-*) but also the Truths of the Gospel are most excellent Truths, as being most remote from ordinary knowledge, *Mat. 16. 17.* most profitable to lost sinners, *Tit. 2. 11.* and do manifest the praise of God's glorious Attributes (*Luke 2. 14.*) more than any other Truths : besides, the Gospel doth clearly hold forth the truth and substance of all these dark and legal shadows, *Joh. 1. 17.* for, by the Word of Truth he meaneth the Gospel, as he presently cleareth ; *After ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation.* 3. As the doctrine of Salvation is the doctrine of the Gospel, or glad-tydings to lost sinners ; (for, the word rendred *Gospel*, signifieth a glad, or good message) So the doctrine of the Gospel is a doctrine of Salvation, as not only revealing Salvation, and a possible way for attaining to it, which the Law doth not, *Gal. 3. 21.* but also being the power of God to Salvation, *Rom. 1. 16.* and the mean which God doth blesse for making us imbrace by faith the offer of Salvation, *Rom. 10. 14. 15.* and for working all other saving graces in the Elect, *Col. 1. 6.* for, the Apostle calleth this doctrine the Gospel, or glad tydings, of Salvation. 4. It is not sufficient to know that the Gospel is a doctrine of Salvation in general, or unto others only ; but every one would labour, by the due application of the promises of the Gospel unto themselves, to find it a doctrine of Salvation to them in particular : for, Paul hinteth at so much, while he saith, not simply, the Gospel of Salvation, but of your Salvation.

From the Spirit's work of sealing following upon believing, *Learn, 1.* As the Gospel preached, and heard, doth not profit unto Salvation, except it be believed ; so the

the Truths of the Gospel, and Jesus Christ that good thing offered in those Truths, is that in the whole Word of God which saving faith doth chiefly close with, and rely upon, and is fully satisfied with: It findeth death in threatnings, a burden of work in precepts, but in Christ and the Gospel it findeth the way to Heaven made patent, even a way how the sinner may be saved and divine justice not wronged: for, the Apostle, having spoken before of their hearing the Gospel, doth adde, *In whom*, to wit, Christ; the words may also read, *In which*, to wit, the Gospel, *ye believed*. 2. Though none can actually believe before the Spirit of God come to dwell in them, bringing alongs His royal train of habituall graces, and the habit of faith amongst the rest, unto the heart with Him; And therefore is He called the Spirit of Faith, 2 Cor. 4. 13-. yet, upon the actual exercising of the grace of Faith, the Spirit of God doth more fully manifest Himself to be dwelling in Believers, by His carrying-on the work of sanctification in them, for their greater comfort, and further strengthening of their faith: for, saith he, *After ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit*. 3. Whoever have rightly closed with the Gospel, and Christ in the Gospel, by believing, will have the grace of sanctification and holiness of life following upon their so doing, as also sometimes some measure of joy, peace and sensible comfort: for, as I cleared, by the seal is meant those graces; And *after ye believed, ye were sealed*, saith he. 4. Even real Believers have need of confirmation and sealing, as being oftentimes exercised and tossed with several doubts and scruples, both concerning the truth of the Gospel, and promise in general, Mark 9. 24. and the reality of their own closing with, and interest in the Promise, Psal. 88. 14. for, therefore is it, that after those Ephesians had believed they were sealed, hereby to evidence the truth of the Gospel, and the sincerity of their believing the Gospel; *After ye believed, ye were sealed*. 5. The Lord hath provided, and accordingly doth bestow sufficient means upon Believers where-

whereby all their fore-mentioned doubts may be solved, and they abundantly satisfied; for, besides the writing of the Promise upon their hearts, and the outward seals of the Covenant of Grace, or Sacraments, which are visibly dispensed by Christ's Ministers, there is an inward seal, to wit, the saving Graces of God's Spirit, together with growth and increase in those, imprinted by the Spirit of God upon the hearts of Believers in order to their confirmation, although they sometimes cannot perfectly discern, nor exactly take up the draughts and lineaments of it; *After ye believed, ye were sealed.* 6. The saving graces of God's Spirit wrought in a Believer, and exercised by him in all sorts of holy duties, and especially growth in grace, is a most convincing evidence, not only that the Word of the Gospel, by which holiness is wrought, is the undoubted Truth of God: for, this is the witness by water, spoken of, 1 *Joh.* 5. 8. there being no other thing but the Truth of God able to produce such strange and supernatural effects as those; but also it serveth to evidence the reality of the man's interest in the promise, and of his right to the heavenly inheritance, in whom those saving graces and the fruits of holiness are, seeing holiness of life is the inseparable effect of saving faith and interest in the promise, *Act.* 15. 9. for, by the *Seal* is meant mainly the graces of sanctification, and, as was shewn, they get that name: because, as Seals do confirm publick Writs, and make them appear to be authentick; so the saving and sanctifying graces of the Spirit do confirm to those, in whom they are, the Truth of the Gospel, and the sincerity of their faith in Christ; *In whom after ye believed, ye were sealed.* 7. Our doubts and scruples, whether concerning the truth of the Promise in general, or our own particular interest in the Promise, ought not in reason make us suspend our believing in Christ and the Promise, untill we first be sealed and sanctified, and so receive sufficient confirmation; but on the contrary, we are, first, to set our Seal to God's Truth, by believing and venturing our salvation upon it, and

and then we may expect next to have God setting His Seal upon our heart in order to our confirmation: for, that is the order here set down; *In whom after ye believed, ye were sealed.* 8. The sanctifying of our natures, and adorning of our hearts with saving graces, together with any confirmation in the truth of the Promise, or of particular interest in the Promise which Believers receive from these, is the work of God's Spirit only: for, it is ascribed to Him here, and with relation thereto He is called *the holy Spirit*, not only because He is essentially holy, and very holiness itself, but also the author of sanctification, and of all saving graces in Believers, *Gal. 5. 22.* and *the Spirit of promise*, not only, because He was promised to be abundantly poured-out upon Believers under the New Testament, *Act. 2. 16.* but also His office is to seal and confirm by His gracious operations the Promises of the Gospel to Believers, *Rom. 8. 16.* *Ye were sealed,* saith he, *with the holy Spirit.*

From that use, for which the holy Spirit with his saving graces was bestowed upon them, *Learn, 1.* As the Spirit of God is a person subsisting, and not a created gift or grace; so this holy Spirit doth not only bestow His gifts and graces upon Believers, but also cometh Himself unto them, and dwelleth in them: In so far, as though He be not personally united with them, as the divine nature is with the humane in Christ; yet He is not only with them in his essence and being, as He is present every-where, *Jer. 23. 24.* nor yet in respect of His working by a general providence only, as He is present even with wicked men; for, in Him they live, move and have their being, *Act. 17. 28.* but He resideth in them, as in his own Temple by his special and saving operations, whereby He not only bestoweth upon them the habits of all saving graces at their first conversion, *Ezek. 36. 25, 26.* but doth also by his immediate, strong and special influence daily preserve those graces in life, (*Job. 10. 28, 29.*) actuate them, (*Philip. 2. 3.*) and ordinarily maketh them to grow, (*Hos. 14. 5.*) for, whereas the word

word *spirit* in the former verse is in the neuter gender, he repeats it here by a masculine relative (which would be better rendred *who* than *which*) to shew that the Spirit is a person subsisting : *Which Spirit*, he saith, *is given us for an earnest of our inheritance.* 2. Heaven and glory is the only portion and inheritance of Believers ; all their enjoyments earthly, though never so great, being but mean, fading in themselves, and lyable to spoyling and vastation from others, so that this inheritance, which is incorruptible, fadeth not away, and is reserved in the heavens (*1 Pet. 1. 4.*) is only worthy to be looked upon as their inheritance : for, the Apostle calleth it *our inheritance*, by way of excellency ; *Which is the earnest of our inheritance.* 3. As the right unto this inheritance is made-over unto Believers, upon their resigning themselves to God by faith, in way of covenant and paction, *Isa. 55. 3.* So the Lord hath thought it convenient not to give them the possession of it presently upon their right, but to delay it for a season, that in the mean time they may exercise their hope in longing after it, *Philp. 1. 23.* And God may get glory from the heirs of heaven here upon earth, and among earthly men, by being the means of salvation unto some, *Mat. 5. 16.* and of conviction and just condemnation unto others, *Heb. 11. 7.* for, the metaphor of an *earnest*, used among Merchants, when the sum covenanted is not presently given, doth bear so much ; *Who is the earnest of our inheritance.* 4. As even Believers are apt to doubt, if ever the covenanted inheritance shall be bestowed and actually enjoyed by them ; So the Lord is most willing to do all which in reason can be required, for removing all doubts of that kind ; and more particularly He giveth them an earnest, or a part of this covenanted inheritance in hand, to assure them of his purpose to bestow the whole in due time : for, the metaphor of an *earnest* doth bear this also, the end of giving an earnest being to assure the receiver of the giver's honest purpose to perform all that he hath promised, which otherwise might be called in question ;
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Who is the earnest of our inheritance. 5. The Spirit of the Lord sealing Believers, and those saving graces of the Spirit. which he worketh in sealing, do serve for the same uses in relation to the Covenant of Grace, wherein heaven and glory is promised to Believers, for which an earnest doth serve in a civil bargain: for, as the earnest is a part of the sum, and usually but a small part, and yet may assure the receiver of his obtaining the whole; So the Spirit and His work of grace received here, is begun glory, *Job. 17. 3.* and though but a small part of it, *1 Cor. 13. 12, 13.* yet the smallest measure of grace may assure the man who hath it, of his obtaining the full possession of glory in the day of the Lord Jesus, *Philip. 1. 6.* hence the Apostle calleth the Spirit with his graces *this earnest; Who is the earnest of our inheritance.*

From the time how long the use of this earnest was to continue, *Learn, 1.* As real Believers are Christs possession in whom He dwelleth, *Eph. 3. 17.* and whom He manureth and maketh fruitfull, *Job. 15. -2.* So He hath purchased them, to wit, by paying a price to provoked justice, *1 Cor. 6. 20:* and by force from Satan their old possessor and master, *Heb. 2. 14, 15.* and purchased them for this end, that He might possess them: for, speaking of Believers, he calleth them *a purchased possession.* 2. Though the redemption and delivery of Believers be already begun, and their bonds loosed in part, *Col. 1. 13.* yet their compleat redemption is but to come, to wit, from sin at death, *Heb. 12. -23.* and from misery, not untill the last day; then, and not while then shall their bodies be raised up in glory, and their redemption be full and compleat, *Rom. 8. 23.* for, the Apostle speaketh of their redemption as of a thing yet to come; *Untill the redemption of the purchased possession.* 3. As this earnest, even the holy Spirit with His graces, being once given, cannot totally be lost; So, if this day of redemption were once come, there shall be no further use of an earnest: the covenanted inheritance will then be fully possessed, and consequently no place left for fears or doubts about

about the obtaining of it; for, he saith, the Spirit was to be an earnest untill the redemption, and so He must continue with them untill then, but was not to serve for an earnest any longer; *Who is the earnest untill the redemption of the purchased possession.*

From the end proposed, see what is already observed upon ver. 6. and ver. 12.

Vers. 15. Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the Saints,

16. Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.

THe Apostle, in the second part of the Chapter, taking occasion from what he heard of those Ephesians, breaketh forth in thanksgiving and prayer to God for them, whereby he prosecuteth his main scope: in so far, as that by every sentence, and word almost, he doth breath forth the high esteem which he had of God's free grace in Christ, and thereby doth confirm their faith; besides that while he prayeth for their perseverance, and growth in the faith and knowledge of saving truths, he doth indirectly, at least, excite them to persevere and make progresse in the same.

And, first, having shewn the good report which was brought unto him of those spiritual graces, which were eminent in them (whereof he instanceth two, which are the sum and compend of all the rest, and doth illustrate them from their principal object, faith in Jesus Christ and love to all the Saints) ver. 15. he maketh known unto them what was his exercise upon their behalf, even that (being incited by the consideration of these spiritual blessings bestowed by God upon them, and mentioned, ver. 13, 14. and by the report which he had of them, ver. 15.) he made conscience to continue in the duties of thanksgiving and prayer to God for them, ver. 16.

From Vers. 15. *Learn, 1.* It is not sufficient that Christs Ministers do presse duties upon the Lords People,
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having

having convincedly cleared unto their consciences the equity which is in those duties ; but they must also hold forth unto them a copie of that obedience, which they so much presse, by their own example and practice : for, so the Apostle, having abundantly cleared, ver. 13, 14, that the Lord's converting and sealing of those Ephesians did call upon them to praise the glory of His grace, he himself doth here put hand to this work ; *Wherefore,* saith he, *I cease not to give thanks for you.* 2. It is a great encouragement to blesse the Lord, and to pray unto Him in behalf of those who are making conscience of these duties for themselves : for, while he saith, *I also give thanks,* he supposeth they were doing the like, and that he was encouraged from thence. 3. Grace is like a precious ointment, whose savour cannot be hid : the report of it, where it is in life, will spread, and make his name, who hath it, savoury unto such, as are truly gracious themselves : for, *Paul,* though at a great distance being now at *Rome,* heard of their faith in *Jesus Christ,* and love to all the Saints. 4. It is the duty of Christians to be joyfully reporting and speaking of the grace of God and good which is in others ; providing it be wisely done, that is, first, sparingly, and so as not to place all our own Religion in speaking of the Religion of others. Secondly, not rashly, or without such grounds in the person whom we commend, as charity at least may rest upon. Thirdly, impartially, and not factiously crying up some, and decrying others, who are equally deserving, *Jude* -16. for, *Paul's* bearing of their faith and love, implyeth, that some had reported to him of that good which was in them. 5. Even in the best Churches in those primitive times, who were most commended by the Apostles, every one had not faith, and so is it yet ; All are not *Israel* who are of *Israel,* *Rom.* 9. 6. for, the word rendred *their faith,* in the Original, is, *the faith which is among you* ; he could not say positively that all of them had faith, but faith was among them. 6. Saving faith is an excellent fruit of the Gospel preached among a People,

People, without which the Word cannot profit, *Heb. 4.* 2. and by which we are united to Christ, and have right to all the spiritual blessings purchased by Christ, who is the chief object of faith, whom it doth apprehend, as He is offered in the Promise: for, *Paul* doth mention their faith in Jesus Christ as an excellent praise-worthy fruit of the Gospel, for which he blesteth God; *After I heard of your faith in Jesus Christ*, saith he. 7. The grace of love to our neighbour, with the duties thereof flowing from love to God in the first place, (*1 Joh. 4. 12.*) is an excellent praise-worthy fruit of the Gospel preached among a People, especially, when the Saints have most of this love as resembling God most. And when their love is laid forth upon Saints, as they are Saints, and for the reality or appearance of God in them, and not for other by-respects only, or mainly; and in a word, when it is extended unto all Saints: for, *Paul* doth mention their love to the Saints and to all Saints, as another excellent praise-worthy fruit of the Gospel, for which he blesteth God; *After I heard of your love unto all the Saints.* 8. As the graces of faith in Christ, and love to the Saints, are alwayes conjoyned, they being in a manner the two legs of a Christian, without any one whereof he cannot walk, and the other is but dead and withered, *Jam. 2. 17.* so faith in its exercise hath the precedency of love, faith being the fountain from which the streams of love do flow; in so far, as faith laying hold upon God's love in Christ, inflameth the heart with love to God; which love to God consisteth in keeping of His Commandments, *1 Joh. 5. 3.* and the chief of God's Commands, next unto love to Himself, is, that we love our brother, *1 Joh. 4. 21.* for, the Apostle here, as elsewhere, *Col. 1. 4. 1 Thess. 1. 4.* conjoyneth these two graces, and giveth faith the precedency; *After I heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and love to all the Saints.*

From *Vers. 16.* Learn, 1. As the duties, both of thanksgiving and prayer, ought to be made conscience of by Christians; so the practice of these two duties do well

together : for, each of them doth contribute for the help of another ; in so far, as thanksgiving to God for favours received, doth notably tend to suppress that fretting, quarrelling, impatient humour, which often venteth it self against God in our prayers, *Psal. 77. 7.* compared with *10, 11.* and the exercise of prayer doth elevate the heart somewhat towards God, and so in some measure warm the affections with love to God, *Psal. 25. 1.* and thus disposeth much for the duty of thanksgiving : for, the Apostle maketh conscience of both those duties, and that joyntly ; *I cease not to give thanks in my prayers.*

2. It is not sufficient for Christians once to begin well, and break off fair in the practice of those duties ; but they must continue in them ; there being always abiding reasons both for thanksgiving and prayer ; and, when there is a lazy falling off from the practice of them for a time, it is usually found a task of greater difficulty to begin of new, than it was at first : for, the Apostle saith, *I cease not to give thanks in my prayers :* he *ceased not*, to wit, so far as his other necessary employments and duties of his calling did permit : for, what we do frequently, and alwayes when occasion offereth, we are said to do it without ceasing.

3. The Ministers of Jesus Christ especially, ought not to be puffed up with any successe, which the Lord is pleased to give unto their labours, or sacrifice to their own drag or net, *Gal. 6. 13.* but would ascribe the praise thereof to God, who alone maketh His People to profit, *Isa. 48. 17.* for, *Paul*, hearing of their faith and love, *ceased not to give thanks for them to God.*

4. As it is the duty of one Christian to pray for another, and especially of a Minister for his Flock ; So our prayers for others will avail little, except we be daily making conscience of praying to God for our selves : for, saith *Paul*, *I make mention of you in my prayers :* he had his own ordinary prayers for himself, wherein he did remember them.

5. As to the occasion of his praying for them, see upon *Col. 1. 9.* doct. 1.

Verf. 17. *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Him :*

18. *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened---*

THE Apostle, in the second place, giveth a short sum of his prayer unto God for them. And, first, he describeth God the Father, unto whom he prayeth, to be *the God of our Lord Jesus Christ*, to wit, as Christ is man, *Psal. 22. 10.* as He is our Mediator, *Psal. 40. 8.* and with relation to that Covenant of Redemption betwixt God and Christ as mediator, *Heb. 2. 13.* And *the Father of glory*; so called, because He is in His own nature infinitely glorious, *Psal. 145. 5.* the fountain of the whole Godhead, and all the divine Attributes in the Son (*Psal. 2. 7.*) and holy Ghost, *Joh. 14. 26.* for, *glory* is sometimes taken for the Godhead and divine Attributes, *Joh. 2. 11.* and because He is the first cause of all that glory which is in any of the creatures, *Psal. 8. 5.* And lastly, He is the object of all glory, to whom all glory is due from the creatures, *Psal. 19. 1.* Secondly, he sheweth what he sought in prayer, even *wisdom*, or a further increase of that wisdom and saving knowledge of divine mysteries, whereof the Spirit of God is the author, mentioned ver. 8. together with a clearer insight in Scripture where those mysteries are revealed by the same Spirit. Which *wisdom* he sheweth, doth mainly consist in the saving, believing, and operative *knowledge of Him*, that is, of Jesus Christ, ver. 17. And having more clearly expressed what he meaneth by this Spirit of wisdom, even the removing of the natural blindness of their understandings, and enduing them with a clear discerning in the things of God, ver. 17- he doth illustrate it further from those ends, for the attainment whereof he would have this wisdom bestowed, as shall be cleared afterwards. Hence *Learn, 1.* The more painfull and laborious that others, whether Ministers, parents, friends

or neighbours, are for bringing about our salvation and spiritual good, we ought to be so much the more excited to painfulness and diligence about the same thing our selves; else their pains will not only do us no good, but also much hurt, the Lord usually judicially plaguing the man, whom every one would have doing well, only himself will not: for, the Apostle sheweth that he prayed, and what he prayed for from God unto them, not to gain applause from them; (for that is condemned, *Mat. 6. 5.*) but that he might excite them unto prayer for themselves, and to endeavour after those things which he sought; *Making mention of you in my prayers, that God may give you, &c.* 2. Though we are not of necessity to stint our selves unto a set form of words in prayer, *Rom. 8. 26.* yet, we would have set purposes condescended upon, and a certain scope to aim at in prayer, so as we may be able to give an accompt of what we pray for, whether in behalf of our selves, or of others; otherwise we can neither expect, nor observe the return of our prayers: for, *Paul*, setting down the sum of his prayer, sheweth he took notice of those things which he prayed for; even *that God may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom*, saith he. 3. Our prayers would be directed unto God only, and neither to glorified Saints, who are ignorant of us, *Isa. 63. 16.* nor yet to the Angels, who (though they be near unto us, *1 Cor. 11. 10.* yet) know not the secrets of hearts, *Jer. 17. 10.* and so are unfit to receive our prayers; besides that there is no warrant in Scripture for praying unto any such, but to God alone: hence the Apostle directeth his prayer unto God, Even, *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ may give unto you.* 4. We ought to draw near to God, especially in the duties of prayer, whether for our selves or others, with confidence and reverence (the one not marring the other) and in order hereto we are so to conceive of God, and expresse such conceptions of ours concerning Him, as may most strengthen our faith in the expectation of what we seek, and may strike our hearts with reverence towards God,
from

from whom we seek : for, those epithets which *Paul* giveth unto God, do tend to strengthen his faith, while he calleth Him *the God of our Lord Jesus Christ* ; and to breed deep reverence in his own heart towards God, while he calleth Him, *the Father of glory*, or *glorious Father*. 5. That we may have access unto God with boldnesse through Christ in prayer, it is necessary to renew that act of faith wherby we apply and appropriate Christ unto our selves, that so being made one with Christ (*Eph. 3. 17.*) we may be looked upon by the Father, as clothed with His righteousness, *Phil. 3. 9.* wherby both our persons and imperfect prayers shall be accepted of by God through Him, *Heb. 11. 4.* for, *Paul*, whose practice here is a directory for prayer, doth appropriate Christ to himself as his own Christ ; *The God of our Lord Jesus Christ*. 6. It is necessary also in order to the same end, that in closing with Christ we do not part or divide Him, but appropriate to our selves the fulnesse of all those perfections which are in Him ; this being an evidence of the sincerity of our closing with Him, and no lesse than whole Christ being necessary to cover all those imperfections, to bear us up under all those discouragements, to help us under all those infirmities which we are compassed with in our approaches to God : for, *Paul* doth appropriate Christ to himself under such titles as hold forth His compleat fulnesse, to wit, of *Lord* ; which implyeth His power and soverainity over all things for the Believers good, *Philip. 2. 9, 10, 11.* Of *Jesus*, which signifieth a Saviour, and pointeth forth His great work and errand to the world to save sinners, *Mat. 1. 21.* And of *Christ*, which signifieth annointed, and so pointeth at His threefold Office unto which He was annointed and furnished in order to that work, *Psal. 45. 7.* *The God of our Lord Jesus Christ*. 7. As *wisdom*, or the saving knowledge of divine mysteries, is necessary unto a Christian ; So, even those who are effectually called, and have a good measure of this grace already, ought not to sit down upon the measure re-

ceived, but would constantly aspire after more of it, as being yet ignorant of many things, and not sufficiently rooted in the knowledge of those things, which they already know, *1 Cor. 13. 9.* for, while *Paul* prayeth for a greater measure of wisdom unto those Ephesians, towards whom God had already abounded in all wisdom, ver. 8. he doth indirectly excite them to endeavour to grow in this grace; *May give unto you the Spirit of wisdom.* 8. The wisdom and knowledge which Christians are to seek after, is not at all that carnal wisdom, which is enmity to God, *Jam. 3. 15.* nor yet chiefly that naturall wisdom, or knowledge of the hid mysteries of nature, *Eccles. 1. 17, 18.* nor yet that wisdom or knowledge of divine mysteries, which is only a gift, and floweth from a common influence of the Spirit, *1 Cor. 8. - 1.* but that whereof the Spirit of God by His special operation and influence is author and worker, and is more than a gift, even the grace of wisdom, which is not acquired by our own industry and pains only, nor yet puffeth up, neither is it weak and coldrise, not warming the heart with love to the thing known, as the gift of wisdom is: but this grace of wisdom cometh from above, *Jam. 3. 17.* by the use of other lawfull means, *Prov. 2. 1, &c.* and must be sought from above, *Jam. 1. 5.* It humbleth the man who hath it, *Job 42. 3, 5, 6.* it is operative upon the heart, and worketh love unto the thing known, *Job. 4. 10.* for, the Apostle prayeth, *that God would give them the Spirit of wisdom;* that is, whereof the Spirit of God is author by His spiritual grace. 9. Spiritual things, the object of this heavenly wisdom and knowledge, are not, for the most part, conclusions drawn from natures light; but are revealed and made known by the Spirit of God, to wit, either in an extraordinary, immediate way, without the help of humane means unto the Prophets and Apostles, *Eph. 3. 5.* or, in an ordinary and mediate way by the help of Scripture, and blessing of God upon the pains of publick Teachers, and such other means as He hath appointed for attaining to the mind of God revealed in Scripture,

Scripture, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15, &c. for, joyntly with the Spirit of wisdom he seeketh *the Spirit of revelation*, implying, that this wisdom cannot be had without revelation. 10. The sum of all saving wisdom, is, to know Christ, and what Scripture speaketh of Him as a compleat Mediator; and so to know Him, as that we acknowledge Him; which speaketh somewhat more than our simple knowing of Him, even a knowing of Him as our own, and with special application to our selves, and so, as we give due honour, respect and reverence unto Him: for, though we are said to know even strangers, and those whom we contemn and despise; yet we are not in strict phrase of speech said to acknowledge any, but these of near relations, or whom we prosecute with that respect and honour which is due unto them, as the servant is said to acknowledge his master. Now, *Paul* giveth this as the sum and compend of saving wisdom, while he saith, *In the knowledge of Him*, to wit, of Christ, or, *in the acknowledgement of Him*, as it is in the Original. 11. It is not sufficient for attaining this grace of wisdom, or saving knowledge of divine truths, that those truths be plainly revealed by the Spirit of God in Scripture; there must be also a removal of that natural darknesse and blindnesse which is in our understandings, whereby we may be enabled to take up that which is revealed, even as to the beholding of colours by the outward sense, there must not only be an outward light to make the object conspicuous, but also the faculty of seeing in the eye: a blind man cannot see at noon-day, nor yet the sharpest-sighted at midnight. Thus for the taking up of things heavenly, the Apostle prayeth both for a *Spirit of revelation*, to make those truths conspicuous, and for a new power of discerning in the understanding, that they might be able to take up the truth so revealed: *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened.* 12. The natural faculties of the soul are not destroyed in conversion, so as if from that time forward the renewed man did nothing, and the Spirit of God residing in him did all things: no, they

they are only renewed by the implanting of new gracious habits and dispositions in them, so that our wit, will and affections being renewed, quickened and wrought upon by the Spirit of God, do also themselves work, *Philip. 2. -12.* for, *Paul* prayeth not that their understanding might be destroyed but enlightened; *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened.*

Verf. 18. -- That ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints.

HERE is one of those ends, for attaining whereof, the Apostle would have this wisdom bestowed upon them, even that they might know those good things, which they were to partake of in Heaven: which are, first, summarily propounded under the name of *hope*, taken here for the object of hope, or things hoped-for, as *Rom. 8. -24. Col. 1. 5.* and the *hope of their calling*, because at their conversion they were called to the participation of those things; next, more fully explained, while they are called *an inheritance*, which is most excellent, as being both *rich* and *glorious*, and appertaineth only to the *Saints* and those who are renewed by the Spirit of God; for, the participle rendered *in* the *Saints*, doth signify, *in*, or, *amongst*, and is so read, *Act. 26. 18. Doct. 1.* As effectually inward calling, whereby we are made a willing people in the day of God's power (*Psal. 110.3.*) is only Christ's work by His Spirit upon the hearts of the Elect, making them to give hearty obedience to the outward call by the mouth of His Ministers; So by this work he openeth unto them a large door of hope, and calleth them, who were before without hope, to partake of an excellent and glorious inheritance, which is here called *hope*, or the thing hoped-for, and the *hope of calling*, they being called to the enjoyment of it, which calling is also called *His*, to wit, God's, or Christ's, because it is His work; *What is the hope of His calling.*
2. Though

2. Though those who are effectually called, do receive some part of that happinesse, unto which they are called, presently, and in hand, to wit, those excellent benefits of justification, adoption and sanctification, and such others as do either accompany, or flow from those in this life, *1 Cor. 6. 11.* yet, the great and chief part of it is not given them in present possession, but reserved in the heavens for them, *1 Pet. 1. 4.* so that they have it only in hope: for, therefore is it called *the hope of their calling*, a thing only hoped-for. 3. Though those excellent things, which are not yet possessed, but only hoped-for by Believers, are known in part and in general, *1 Job. 3. - 2.* even so far, as the knowledge which we have of them is sufficient to terminate our hope; (otherwise if they were wholly unknown they could not be hoped-for) yet so excellent are those things in themselves, and therefore remote from our knowledge, and so much are we taken up with trifles and childish toys, that even true Believers, and they who know most, and have their thoughts most exercised about them, are in a great part ignorant of them: they neither know them fully, nor particularly, *Isa. 64. 4.* So that heaven and glory will be found another kind of thing, than ever entered in the heart of man to think upon or look after, *1 Cor. 2. 9.* for, he prayeth, that even the called Ephesians *might know what is the hope of His calling*, implying that they were yet in a great part ignorant of it. 4. That measure of knowledge which may be attained here of those excellent things hoped-for, should be carefully endeavoured and diligently sought after by Believers, as being of great concernment to make them seek after these things being so known, *Philip. 3. 14.* to sweeten the bitternesse of their crosse, *Rom. 8. 18.* furnish them with matter for sweet meditation upon heaven and things heavenly, *Philip. 3. 20.* and to make them more vehemently long and desire after the actual possession of those things, *Philip. 1. 23.* for, Paul's praying for wisdom, that they may know *the hope of His calling*, implyeth, that much more themselves ought to seek after the

the knowledge of it. 5. As those excellent things which are now hoped-for, and really to be enjoyed in the other life, are of the nature of an inheritance, which is not purchased by us, but freely bestowed upon us ; so they are properly Christ's inheritance, who hath proper right to it, as being the natural Son of God, and by vertue of His own purchase ; but the right which we have is communicated to us through Him, In whom we have received the adoption of children, and so are made heirs and co-heirs with Christ, *Rom. 8. 17.* for, the Apostle, explaining what those things hoped-for are, calleth them an inheritance, and *His inheritance*; *And what the riches of the glory of His inheritance.* 6. This heavenly inheritance is a rich inheritance, as wanting nothing to make the state of those who enjoy it compleatly happy, and giving full satisfaction and contentment, *Psal. 17. 15.* and therefore it is called *the riches of his inheritance*, that is, after the manner of speech much used among the Hebrews, *A rich inheritance.* 7. It is also a glorious inheritance, there being nothing there but what is glorious : The sight shall be glorious ; for, we shall see God, as we are seen, *1 Cor. 13. 12.* the place shall be glorious, *2 Cor. 12. 4.* the company glorious, all the glorified Saints and Angels, *Heb. 12. 22, 23.* our souls and bodies shall be glorious, *Philip. 3. 21.* and our daily exercise shall be glorious, even to give glory unto God for ever and ever, *Rev. 7. 9, 10.* for, therefore it is called *the glory of his inheritance*, or, *his glorious inheritance.* 8. Though sanctification and holinesse do not merit this heavenly inheritance, seeing it cometh to us freely, and as it were by lot ; (as the word signifieth) yet none have present right to it, nor yet shall have possession of it afterwards, but only the Saints, even they who are renewed and inherently holy : Without holinesse none shall see God, *Heb. 12. - 14.* for, he saith, *it is an inheritance in the Saints*, that is, whereof only Saints are possessors. 9. That we know and acknowledge Christ aright, it is necessary to perpend much, and thereby endeavour to know how usefull

useful a person he hath been and is unto us ; what great rich and glorious things He hath purchased for us, and doth preserve in heaven for our behoof : for, he men- ioneth their knowing the hope of His calling, as one end or part of that wisdom which consisteth in the knowing or acknowledgement of Him, spoken of, ver. 17. *That ye may know the hope of his calling, &c.*

Verf. 19. *And what is the exceeding greatnesse of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power.*

HERE is another of those ends, for attaining whereof the Apostle would have this wisdom bestowed upon them, even that they might know somewhat of that which they partake, at least in this life, to wit, the greatnesse of God's power, which He exerceth in and towards Believers, in His bestowing upon them saving grace, and carrying-on of that work in despite of men and devils from step to step, until grace shall be crowned in glory, and they actually installed in the possession of that rich and glorious inheritance : and he representeth and describeth this power, first, from its greatnesse ; it is great, and so great, that sufficient words cannot be found to expresse the greatnesse of it, it is superlative, and hyperbolically great ; for, so the word in the Original signifieth. Secondly, from the object towards whom this power is exercised, to wit, Believers. And, thirdly, from the principle and fountain from whence this powerfull working floweth, even God's own natural and infinite power : which he describeth from two epithets, It is mighty ; yea, almighty, so, as nothing is too hard for it, *Gen. 18. 14.* and it is a working power, or efficacious in working, and so as it cannot be resisted, where it is employed to work, *Isa. 27. 4. Doct. 1.* So unworthy is any of the lost sons of Adam of this heavenly inheritance, *Eph. 2. - 3.* so great and insuperable are these difficulties which are in their way to it, *Eph. 6. 12.* and so weak and impotent are they to get them overcome, *2 Cor.*

3. 5. that no lesse than the omnipotent power of God working omnipotently is required to make them meet for it, and bring them to the actual possession of it; and therefore only the consideration of this mighty power can answer those doubts wherewith sense of weaknesse and unworthinesse will furnish a man against the possibility of his ever attaining to it: for, what is here spoken of God's power, seemeth to be subjoyned, thereby to point forth the way, how that rich inheritance is attained, and to solve those doubts which they might have had against their coming to it; *And what is the exceeding greatnesse of His power.* 2. They, and they only shall come to possesse this heavenly inheritance after time, who partake of the working of His mighty power upon their hearts in time: for, having spoken of that rich and glorious inheritance, he speaketh here of the exceeding greatnesse of His power towards those who believe: whereby he sheweth not only how we come to that inheritance, but also who those are, who shall come to it. 3. The power which God exercees in converting and carrying-on the work of grace to glory in the Elect, is not only great, but exceedeth all contrary power which might impede that work; so, that there is no power in the devil, the world, in sin, nor death, which this power doth not overcome; yea, nor any impotency in the Elect themselves, which this greatnesse of power will not help and strengthen: for, he calleth it *the exceeding greatnesse of His power.* 4. There cannot a more pregnant proof be given of God's omnipotent power in working, than what He giveth in converting sinners from sin to holiness, and carrying-on the work of grace in them against all opposition, until they come to heaven: The creation of the world, and working of miracles, is no more evident proof of His omnipotency in working than this is: for, he instanceth the exceeding greatnesse of His mighty power, not in any of those things, but in His working towards Believers; *Towards us who believe,* saith he. 5. So averse are men by nature from believing in Jesus Christ for

for righteousness, so great an enemy is Satan to the grace of faith above all other graces, *Luke* 22. 31, 32. that no lesse than the working of God's exceeding great and mighty power is required for working us up to the grace of faith, and the exercise of it: for, his designing them by the name of *Believers*, while he speaketh of the exceeding greatnesse of this power, implyeth so much; *Towards us who believe*. 6. Those only are most fit to speak of God's powerful and gracious working in hearts, who have found somewhat of that work in themselves: such will speak both more confidently, and more thoroughly of this work, there being somewhat of God's work in hearts, which cannot be so fully attained by meer reading or hearing, except experience serve as a commentary to understand what is read and heard, *Psal.* 34. 8. for, therefore, saith he, not, *towards those who believe*, but *Us who believe*, including himself, to shew he spoke of this power, not as a stranger to it, but from experience, that they might believe him the rather. 7. This mighty power of God in its working towards *Believers*, is extended unto all times, without restriction unto any difference of time, either by-past, present, or to come: It hath wrought in their first conversion, and bringing them to believing, *Job* 6. 44. it doth work by preserving them in the state of grace, *Luke* 22. 32. by actuating their graces in them, *Philp.* 2. 13. and making them to grow, *Cant.* 4. 16. and shall continue with them alwaies working until their graces be perfected, and they completely glorified, *Philp.* 1. 6. for, he expresseth no difference of time wherein it worketh, only that it doth work; And what is the exceeding greatnesse of His power to us-ward who believe. 8. God's omnipotent and efficacious power, which belongeth unto Him naturally and essentially as He is God, is not only the fountaine and principle from whence His powerfull operation towards *Believers* doth flow, but also the rule according to which He doth work; so that He is not only omnipotent, who worketh, but also He worketh omnipotently

tently, and therefore irresistibly: for, saith he, *The greatnesse of His power to us-ward who believe, is, according to the working of his mighty power.* 9. Even those who are Believers, in whom this mighty power hath already wrought, may be in a great measure ignorant of the exceeding greatnesse of it: they are destitute even of the notional knowledge of it in a great part, because of the mysteriousnesse of the subject, *Job. 3. 8.* and their litle acquaintance with the Word, which revealeth the way of God's working in souls, *Psal. 77.* and *88.* but chiefly of experimental knowledge; there being much to be wrought in them by His mighty power, whereof they can have no experience as yet, *Philip. 3. 21.* there being much also already wrought in them, and they know it not, but doubt of it, *Job 9. 11.* for, though it be a mighty working power; yet it hath a meek, sweet, (*Phal. 110. 3.*) secret, (*Cant. 5. 4.*) and therefore a not easie discernable work; Thus those believing Ephesians were in a great part ignorant of this power, else to what purpose did the Apostle pray that *they might know what is the exceeding greatnesse of his power?* 10. The experimentall knowledge chiefly of God's way of working in, and towards Believers, is to be carefully sought after, as being of great concernment to make us thankfull to God for His gracious working in us where it is known and felt, *Psal. 116. 8, 9, &c.* as also in order to our own comfort arising from that our knowledge, *Psal. 116. 7.* and to strengthen our faith and hope in God, *Rom. 5. 4.* for, while *Paul* prayeth for the knowledge of this mighty working power to them, he teacheth them to seek after this knowledge themselves; *That ye may know what is the exceeding greatnesse of his power.* 11. This experimental knowledge of God's power, is an eminent part of spiritual wisdom, and of our knowing and acknowledging of Christ aright: for, he prayeth, that *they may know what is the exceeding greatnesse of his power*, as one end or part of that spiritual wisdom, which consisteth in the knowledge or acknowledgment of Him, spoken of, ver. -17.

Verf. 20. Which He wrought in Christ when He raised him from the dead, and set Him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.

THE Apostle, in the third branch of this second part of the Chapter, taking occasion from what he spoke of the exceeding greatnesse of God's power in Believers, ver. 19. falleth out upon a commendation, and more large explication of that mighty power, taken from one of its admirable effects towards Christ, in exalting Him from His low condition, whereby he doth yet prosecute his main scope; for, what greater confirmation could be given unto their faith in Christ, than the making known unto them, how highly exalted Christ is, and that the same divine power, which exalted Him, had wrought, was working, and would continue to work in them, untill all those glorious things, which they had now only in hope, should be actually bestowed upon them? And, first, that he may commend and clear that mighty Power, according to which God did work in the believing Ephesians, he doth briefly propound two things, which were wrought by it towards the exaltation of Christ; first His resurrection from the dead; Secondly, His being set at the right hand of God in heavenly places, whereby is set forth that high glory and dignity, which after Christ's resurrection and ascension was put upon Christ, as God-man, far surpassing the glory of all things created, *Philip. 2. 9.* together with that high power and authority, which the same Christ God-man hath obtained over all things to dispose of them for the Churches good, *1 Pet. 3. 22.* which glory and authority of Christ is only visible in the Heavens, and therefore it is said to be *in heavenly places*; because Christ's humane nature, through which His Deity doth shine and manifest it self, is only in Heaven, *Act. 3. 21.* although the effects of this His power and authority may be and are perceived elsewhere, *Act. 2. 33.* And that

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this is intended to be held forth by Christ's sitting at the Father's right hand, is clear, not only from the places presently cited, and the Apostle's own explication, which he subjoyneth in the verses following, but also from the phrase it self, which cannot be proper; seeing God hath neither right nor left hand properly, *Joh. 4. 24.* and so must be a metaphor borrowed from Kings and Princes, who do set those at their right hand, whom they highly honour, *1 King. 2. 19.* or, place in any office of chief authority and trust, *Mat. 20. 21. Doct. 1.* As our Lord Jesus was once among the dead; So He did rise again from death, (See upon *Gal. 1. ver. 1. doct. 7.*) for, saith he, *When He raised Him from the dead.* 2. The raising of Christ from the dead, as it was the Father's work; So, considering what an eminent person Christ was, and how low He was brought, *Philip. 2. 6, 7, 8.* and what a height of honour He was exalted unto, *Philip. 2. 9, 10.* and that He did sustain our person in dying (the iniquities of us all being laid upon Him, *Isa. 53. -6.*) and in rising again from death, *Eph. 2. 5, 6.* All those, I say, being considered, this work of raising Christ, was an effect of God's extraordinary and mighty power: for, as he ascribeth the raising of Christ to the Father, which doth not contradict those Scriptures which affirm Christ to have risen by His own power, *John. 2. 19.* and *10. 17.* because it is one and the same power which is in both Father and Son, they being one only God, *1 Joh. 5. 7.* So he doth ascribe it to the working of His mighty power, spoken of, *vers. -19.* and related unto in this, while he saith, *Which, or according to which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead.* 3. The self-same omnipotent power, which wrought in, and towards Christ's exaltation in all the steps of it, is engaged for working grace, and carrying-on the work of grace in Believers, and for performing unto Believers whatever they have ground to hope-for from His Word: and therefore we may look upon the severall effects and proofs of this power towards Christ, as so many pledges, that

that God will against all opposition perform whatever He hath undertaken to us : for, He maketh that power, whereby He worketh in Believers, and whereby He raised Christ from the dead, to flow from one and the same fountain and principle in God, and the one to be according to the other, while he saith, *According to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ.*

4. This high honour and sovereign power, signified by sitting at the Father's right hand, was put upon Christ, not before, but after His humiliation and resurrection from the dead ; for, then in His humane nature He did receive dominion and honour, which He never had untill then, as man ; and, though being considered as God, clothed only with His own divine Majestic, He was from all eternity equal in power and glory with the Father and holy Ghost, *Philip. 2. 6.* yet He did not reign as God incarnate, and clothed with our flesh, untill then, having hid His divine glory, so that very little of it did appear under the infirmities of the humane nature from His incarnation untill then, *Philip. 2. 7, 8.* but then He did manifest His divine glory, absolute power and authority in a way incomprehensible by us, in and through the vail of His glorified flesh : for, the Apostle sheweth those things were done in this order, while he saith, *When He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand.*

5. Although the divine and humane nature in Christ are not confounded, but remain distinct both in their essence and operations, each nature doing that which is proper unto it self, *Heb. 9. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 18.* yet, so near and strict is that personall union of the two natures in Christ, that those things, which are proper only unto the one nature, are ascribed unto, and spoken of the whole person : for here, though this high honour and trust put upon Christ was in some things verified only in the divine nature, in so far as it speaketh His manifestation of His divine glory and exercising His divine authority, as God incarnate, in, and through the humane nature : And though in some

things it was verified only in the humane nature, in so far as it speaketh His obtaining of glory and power from the Father, which before He had not; yet, the whole of it is ascribed unto the whole person of Christ God-man, while he saith, *And made Him to sit at His own right hand.* 6. Though Christ as Mediator be exalted to such high honour and authority, as no meer creature is capable of; yet, so far is His humane nature from being made hereby omnipotent, omnipresent, and consequently equal with God, That even whole Christ, considered as Mediator, is inferior and lesse than the Father, *Job. 14. -28.* as having received all this honour and authority from the Father, *Matth. 28. 18.* and administering His Kingdom in the Father's Name, *Job. 5. 22.* which He is also to render up unto the Father, *1 Cor. 15. 24.* for, not only do the Scriptures cited, but also the phrase here used, prove so much, seeing those whom the King setteth at his right hand do hold their dignity and trust from him, and must be comtable unto him; *And set Him at His own right hand.*

Verf. 21. Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:
22. And hath put all things under His feet,---

THe Apostle, in the second place, insisteth upon that second effect of God's mighty power, and explaineth what he meant by the Father's setting of Christ at His own right hand, even, that which we formerly shewed, to wit, that transcendent glory and dignity, with full power and sovereignty which was put upon Him. And first, he speaketh of that general power and eminency, which He hath over and above all the creatures, by shewing that He is exalted in glory, not only above, but far above the glory of all creatures whatsoever, whether principality, power, might, or dominion, under which is comprehended every thing that is excellent among the creatures,

creatures, whether in Heaven, Earth, or Hell; for, sometimes good Angels are expressed by those titles, *Eph. 3. 10.* sometimes bad Angels, *Eph. 6. 12.* and sometimes Civil powers, *Tit. 3. 1.* And lest any might apprehend some dignity besides, not comprehended under any of these four, he addeth a general clause, comprising every name, that is, all things excellent or famous, and worthy to be so named; as famous men are called men of Name; So that he hereby sheweth no creature can enter in competition with Christ in glory, dignity and worth: and withall he extendeth this glory put upon Christ in its duration, not only unto this world, but that which is to come, and shall never have an end, ver. 21. And that he may exalt Christ yet further, he sheweth, that He is not only above all creatures in glory, but also in dominion and sovereignty, the Father having placed all the creatures in a state of lowest subjection unto Him, even *under His feet*, to be disposed of as He seeth fit.

From Verſ. 21. *Learn, 1.* The glory and splendor of things created hath some aptnesse in it, if it be not rightly looked on, or rather we are apt to take occasion from it to hide and undervalue the glory and excellency of Jesus Christ; for otherwise the Apostle would not labour so much to set Him high up above them, and His glory above theirs; *Far above all principality and power.* 2. Though Scripture give some ground to affirm, that there are different degrees and dignities among the Angels, *Dan. 10. 13.* and *12. 1.* yet, what are their different orders, offices, and dignities, Scripture doth nowhere determine: neither is there any ground for us to determine from this place: for, as we shew, the Apostle's scope is under those titles, and the general clause subjoyned, to lay aside, not only Angels, but all civil powers, and all created dignity whatsoever from competing with Christ in the point of power, excellency and worth; *Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named.* 3. Even the humane nature of Christ, and His glorified body by vertue of

that unspeakable union which is betwixt the two natures of Christ in one person. is lifted up so high in glory, that the glory of Kings and Emperors, of Sun, Moon and Stars, of the souls of just men made perfect; yea, and of glorious Angels, is nothing to it, and lesse than the light of a candle being compared with the Sun in his brightnesse: for, he is speaking here of that glory, which Christ hath by sitting at the right hand of God, which, as to some pieces of it, doth belong to Christ, as man; and of it he affirmeth, that it is *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named.* 4. As we do then only think aright of that high glory put upon Christ, when we look on it as matchlesse, and not only above, but far, and infinitely far above all that glory, which can be found in all, or any of the creatures; So the holding forth of Christ in his glory by the Lord's Servants, is a point of great concernment for the good of God's People, to make all created glory wax dim and bulkleesse, *Dan. 3. 16, 17, 18.* to draw their hearts up after and towards Him, *Job. 4. 10.* to hearten them against those discouragements they usually meet with in doing service to Him, *Act. 7. 55, 56.* and to make them more reverent in their approaches to Him, *Heb. 12. 25.* for therefore doth Paul so much labour as he cannot well satisfie himself, in setting forth that high glory wherein Christ is, while he saith, *He is above, and far above;* and then enumerateth four comprehensive particulars, and addeth a general clause comprising all things, and preferreth Christ unto all; *Far above all principality and power, &c.* 5. As there is a world to come, when this is gone, wherein shall dwell righteousness, *2 Pet. 3. 13.* So, though Christ's Kingdom shall cease at the last day, and be delivered up by Him to the Father, as to the way wherein He doth now administer it, by ruling in the midst of His enemies, *Psal. 110. 2.* whom He subdueth and destroyeth, *Psal. 2. 9.* and gathering-in His Elect by the means of Word and Sacraments, *Matth. 28. 19, 20.* Yet this Kingdom of His shall

shall never cease, but be continued in that world which is to come without end, as to the glory, majestic, absolute sovereignty and dominion over all the creatures, which Jesus Christ Mediator, and God manifested in the flesh shall enjoy for ever and ever: for, these words, *Not only in this world, but in the world to come*, do shew the duration of Christ's kingly glory, and are to be referred not to the word *named*, immediately preceeding, but to God's action of setting Christ at His right hand, far above all principality, *not only in this world, &c.*

From Vers. 22- *Learn*, 1. The Lord hath all things at His disposal, to do with them what He pleaseth: for, saith Paul, *He hath put all things under His feet*, which He could not have done, except they had been at His disposal. 2. Jesus Christ, God-man, Mediator, is not only exalted unto high glory and dignity above all the creatures; but also hath received absolute dominion and sovereign authority over them all, So that all the creatures, even the greatest, are subjected to Him, and that in the lowest degree of subjection, to wit, some willingly, as the effectually called and chosen, *Psal. 110. 3*—others by constraint, and without, or contrary to any purpose or intention of their own, being lyable unto, and made use of by His over-ruling power for bringing about His own glory and His Churches good, *Rom. 8. 28*. Thus devils, reprobates, crosses, tentations, and all creatures are subjected to Him: for, it seemeth those *all things*, which are under Christ's feet, must be taken universally of all creatures whatsoever, as being most agreeable, not only to the verse preceeding, where the comparison is made betwixt Christ and all creatures, but also to *Philip. 2. 10, 11*. which place is a commentary unto this, *He hath put all things under His feet*.

Verf. --22. And gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church,

23. Which is his body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

THe Apostle, having spoken of Christ's glory and sovereignty in general over all the creatures, doth next hold forth His special dominion and sovereignty over the Church, by shewing, that Christ, *over or above all*, that is, in a special manner, is given by the Father to be the Churches head; which is a metaphor taken from the natural body, to which he compareth Christ and his Church. And, first, he sheweth that Christ doth answer to the head: which implyeth an eminency in Him above the Church, His Body, *Cant.* 5. 10. together with authority and power over His Church to rule and govern her, both visibly by His own Officers, dispensing the Word and Censures, *1 Cor.* 5. 4. and inwardly, by the powerfull operation of his Spirit, *Joh.* 16. 13, 14. It implyeth also oneness of nature betwixt Him and His Church, *Heb.* 2. 14. and fulnesse of perfection, enabling Him to do all the duties of an head to such a great, necessitous and infirm body, as His Church is, *Col.* 2. 3. And it implyeth a strict union betwixt Him and His Church, as is betwixt the head and members in the natural body: the tye of which union, as to the Church visible (which is His visible, political and ministerial body, *1 Cor.* 10. 16, 17.) is the bond of the Covenant of Grace, wherein they are externally, *Psal.* 50. 5. together with a profession of faith in Christ, *Act.* 8. 37. But as to the invisible Church of real Believers, they are, as to the inward man, animated and enlivened with that same Spirit, which was poured-forth on Christ, *Rom.* 8. 9. they have also faith in Him, and love to Him, wrought by His Spirit in them, *Col.* 1. 4. *Eph.* 6. 24. and hereby they are united most strictly to Him. And, lastly, the metaphor implyeth communication of influence from Christ to the Church, to wit, an influence of common gifts from His Spirit

Spirit to the visible Church, *Eph. 4. 7. &c.* and an influence of spirituall life, motion, and of saving grace to the invisible Church of Believers, *Col. 2. 19.* even as the head is above, and ruleth the body, is of the same nature with the body, hath all the inward and outward senses with memory and understanding seated in it for guiding the body, is united to the body, and conveyeth influence for motion and sense unto the body. And, secondly, ver. 23. he sheweth that the Church answereth to the rest of the body under the head, and is called Christ's body, to wit, not His natural, but mystical body: which implyeth not only the Churches union with Christ, but union and order also among the members themselves, together with diversity of gifts and functions, as there are several members in the natural body, *1 Cor. 12.* It implyeth also their receiving influence for life and motion from Christ, *Eph. 4. 16.* and the duty of subjection and obedience due unto Him as head, *Eph. 5. 24.* He sheweth also the high honour which is put upon the Church by being Christ's body, even, that hereby they become Christ's fulnesse, not as if Believers did adde any personal perfection to Him, who is infinit in perfections, unto whom nothing can be added; Only, they are members of that mystical body, unto which He of grace hath undertaken the relation of head, so, that the Church is the fulnesse, not of personall, but of mystical Christ, as both head and members of that mystical body are comprehended under that name *Christ.* See *1 Cor. 12. 12.* and therefore, lest any should think that this expression did imply any want of perfection in Christ to be supplied by the Church, the Apostle sheweth, that Christ, as God-man, Mediator, filleth the *all* of His body the Church (for, the purpose in hand requireth this *all* to be so astricted) upon whom He bestoweth a fulnesse, partly of gifts, and partly of graces, a fulnesse answerable to the present state of childhood and imperfection, wherein we live here on earth; as the Romans are said to be full of goodnesse and knowledge, *Rom. 15.*

14. So, that Christ is so far from borrowing any perfection from His Church, that all her perfections are but drops falling from that Ocean and fulnesse of grace which is in Him, *Job. 1. 16. Doct. 1.* As Jesus Christ is the Father's gift unto the Church; A gift which is offered unto all within the Church, *Job. 3. 16.* though not received by all, *Job. 1. 11.* but by real Believers, who, by receiving Him, obtain a right unto Him, *Job. 3. 36.* with 1 *Job. 5. 11, 12.* and to all those excellent saving priviledges, which were purchased by Him, *Job. 1. 12.* So, whoever would receive this gift aright, must receive Him as their head, to quicken them, to rule them, and to be revered by them: for, *He gave Him to be head to the Church.* 2. The power and superiority, which Christ hath over His Church, chiefly, the invifible Church of reall Believers, as head, is of another kind than that which He hath over all other creatures besides, as being more intimate, amiable, and in a manner more native and natural, and accompanied with willing subjection in His Church, *Pfal. 110. 3.* even as the superiority which the King's head hath over his own body, or his royal consort, being compared with that which he hath over his subjects, or rather his subdued enemies: for, *He gave Him to be head over all to the Church; Over all,* that is, in a singular and eminent manner above the domination which He hath over all other creatures. 3. None in any sense can be an head to the Church, unto whom the Church in that same sense is not a body; so, that if the Church be not the Pope's body, the Pope cannot be the Churches head: for, there is a reciprocation betwixt the head and body in this purpose, as Christ is the Churches head, so the Church is His body; *He gave Him to be head to the Church, which is His body.* 4. None can draw comfort from those sweet relations of head, husband, king, &c. which Christ hath taken upon Him towards His Church, but they who stand under a correspondent relation towards Him, as being His body, spouse, and subjects, and who make consci-

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ence of such duties as each of these relations do bind unto: for, as Christ is an head to the Church, so the Church is His body; *Which is His body*, saith he. 5. As Christ by taking upon Himself those relations towards His Church, which are found amongst men, doth stand obliged unto those duties, which men are bound to by vertue of such relations, *Psal. 23. 1, &c.* So the Lord's People are allowed, and commanded to search unto the duties and priviledges following upon such relations among men, and from thence to learn what to expect from Christ by vertue of that relation, and what honour and priviledges they do enjoy by standing under that relation to Christ: for, from this, that Christ and the Church stand under the relation of head and body, the Apostle inferreth that the Church hath this priviledge of being Christ's fulnesse, even, as the shoulders, arms, breast, belly, legs, and thighes, are the fulnesse of the natural body, so that mystical Christ made up of head and members, is not compleat and full without the Church, or the least Believer in the Church; *Which is His body, the fulnesse of Him*, saith he. 6. In searching forth the grounds of these similitudes or relations, taken from amongst men, whereby Christ setteth forth to our capacity what He himself is to His People, we would carefully guard, lest by pressing them too far, we ascribe any thing to Christ which is not according to the analogie of Faith, or in any measure dishonourable to Him: for, *Paul*, having stretched-forth that similitude of the head and body so far as to infer thence, that the Church is the fulnesse of mystical Christ, he carefully guardeth against a mistake, whereby people might think, that then some perfection were wanting in Christ to be supplied by His Church, while he saith, that *Christ filleth all in all*. 7. As even Believers in themselves are empty creatures till they be filled, being destitute of all good which they may call their own, *Rom. 7. 18.* and unable to help themselves, if it were but with one right thought, *2 Cor. 3. 5.* So there is a supply to the full of all their emptinesse

nesse in Christ, who is made of God unto them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, 1 Cor. 1. 30. and communicateth largely and to the full of His own fulnesse, unto such as are sensible of their own emptinesse, Job. 1. 16. Psal. 81. - 10. for, *He filleth all in all.* 8. Before that Christ do thus supply our emptinesse out of His own fulness, He must first be in us, and united to us by faith, Eph. 3. 17. for, *He is in all whom He filleth; He filleth all in all.*

CHAP. II.

IN the first part of this Chapter, the Apostle doth commend the doctrine of salvation by free-grace, first, from the consideration of that misery, under which, not only the Ephesians and other Gentiles were before conversion; as being spiritually dead, ver. 1. following the corrupt custom of the world, and Satan's suggestions, v. 2. but even the Jews also, as being enslaved to their own corrupt lusts, v. 3. Secondly, from the consideration of that delivery from sin and misery, which was common to them both. And, first, he mentioneth the first fountain and internal impulsive cause of that delivery, to wit, God's free-grace, ver. 4. Secondly, the several branches of it, as their quickning in the way of grace, ver. 5. the resurrection of their bodies, and their glorification in heaven, ver. 6. Thirdly, the final cause of this delivery, to wit, the manifesting of God's rich grace, ver. 7. And, fourthly, he cleareth, and proveth they were saved only by grace, by removing all other things inconsistent with grace from having influence upon our salvation: And that, first, generally, ver. 8. and then particularly, their good works: because, first, otherwise they should have had matter of gloriation in themselves, as to this purpose, the contrary whereof is intended by God, ver. 9. Secondly, power to do good works

works was given them in regeneration ; So that though they be necessary, yet they are not meritorious, ver. 10.

In the second part of the Chapter, he maketh a more particular application of the former purpose unto the Ephesians, and in them to all the Gentiles. And, first, he layeth forth that misery, which was in a great part peculiar unto them, as they were Gentiles ; and this both more generally, ver. 11. and more particularly in five several branches, ver. 12. Secondly, he declareth their present happy estate of nearness to God and His Church through Christ, briefly, ver. 13. and explaineth more fully that Christ was the peace-maker, and in order to His making peace had abolished the ceremonial Law, ver. 14, 15. and sheweth a twofold necessity of Christ's so doing, both for uniting of Jew and Gentile in one Church, ver. 15. And for reconciling both of them to God, ver. 16. Thirdly, he sheweth that this benefit of nearness was published, and actually communicated unto them by the preaching of the Gospel, ver. 17. which he proveth from the access which both Jew and Gentile had to God, ver. 18. And lastly, he concludeth from what is said, that the Ephesians were now in a blessed state, comparing the whole Church to a city, a family, ver. 19. and to a stately edifice founded upon Christ, ver. 20, 21. And shewing they were a part of this building, ver. 22.

Verf. 1. *And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.*

THe Apostle (being yet further, to establish those Ephesians in the doctrine of salvation by free grace in Christ, and for this end, to set forth the happiness of that estate, in which free grace had placed them) sheweth the misery of their former estate before conversion, even that they were dead not naturally, but spiritually ; there being nothing of that spiritual life in them which consisteth in the union of the soul with God

God, *Job*. 5. 40. and in a vertue and power of the soule flowing from this union, to do those things which are spiritually good, and acceptable unto God, *Job*. 15. 5. even as the natural life consisteth in the union of the soule with the body, whereby the man is inabled to move, speak, and do such other actions as are competent to that life, so that their spiritual deadnesse doth speak a separation from God, *Psal.* 58. 3. and total inability to do any thing which is spiritually good, *Rom.* 8. 7. The efficient and formall cause of which death he sheweth to have been their *sins and trespasses*: whereby under two words used indifferently in Scripture to expresse one and the same thing, and both of them in the plural number, is set forth the multitude of sins under which they lay in this their dead condition, as their original sin, their actual sins, sins of omission, commission, and especially their manifold idolatries, which are chiefly pointed at, as those sins, wherein, not only the Ephesians, but the world in general did wallow before Christ came in the flesh, *Act.* 17. 29, 30. Hence *Learn*, 1. It is not sufficient that the Servants of Jesus Christ do only preach priviledges, and hold-forth unto Believers that happy estate unto which they are lifted-up through Christ; It is necessary also, that joyntly herewith, they be calling them to minde their wofull, miserable and lost estate by nature; that, the one being set foregainst the other, both may more clearly appear in their own colours, and that those dangerous rocks of growing vain because of what they now are (*2 Cor.* 12. 7.) and of turning discouraged and diffident, because of what they once were (*Psal.* 25. 7.) may be eschewed: for, the Apostle, in the preceeding chapter, having spoken much of those high priviledges unto which the Ephesians were advanced by Christ, he doth here minde them of that miserable state wherein God found them; *And you who were dead in sins and trespasses*. 2. There is nothing contributeth more to commend the doctrine of free grace to peoples consciences, and so to commend it, as to make them closely ad-
here

here unto it, both in profession and practice, than the serious perpending of mans wofull, and altogether hopelesse estate by nature : This alone would do much to scatter all that mist, whereby humane reason doth obscure the beauty of this truth, by extolling man's free will as a co-worker with grace, *Rom. 3. 19, 20.* and would necessitate the lost sinner to imbrace it, and to venture his otherwise hopelesse salvation upon it, *1 Tim. 1. 15.* for this is the Apostle's scope through this whole Chapter, even, from the consideration of the wofull estate of those Ephesians before conversion, to illustrate this doctrine of salvation by free grace, and to confirm them in it ; *And you who were dead in sins and trespasses.* 3. Believers in Jesus Christ are not to look upon their lost and miserable estate by nature separately, and apart from, but joyntly with, God's free grace and mercy, which hath delivered them from that misery ; for otherwise the thoughts of sin and misery may, if God should give way, swallow them up, *Mat. 27. 4, 5.* Hence is it the Apostle hath so contrived his discourse here, that all-alongs, while he speaketh of their misery in the first three verses, the mind of the Reader is kept in suspense without coming to the perfect close of a sentence, untill God's mercy in their delivery from this misery be mentioned, ver. 5. for, the Original hath not these words, *he hath quickened*, in this verse : but the Translators have taken them from ver. 5. to make up the sense, without suspending the Reader so long untill he should find them in their own proper place ; *And you who were dead, &c.* 4. Every man by nature, and before conversion, is dead, not *to sin*, (for that is proper to the Regenerate only. See *Rom. 6. 2.* where the grammatical construction is the same in the Original with that which is here ; only the sense is much different) but *in sin*, whereby he is wholly deprived of all ability and power to convert himself, *Rom. 9. 16.* or to do any thing which is spiritually good, *Rom. 8. 7.* for, while he saith, the Ephesians were dead in sins, before God did quicken them, he speaketh of a thing com-

mon to them with others, and therefore he reckoned himself. and the other believing Jews with them, *ver. 3.* And you who were dead in sins. 5. As the fountain-cause of this spiritual death was *Adam's sin*, in whom all have sinned, *Rom. 5. 12.* through the merit of whose sin imputed to us, we are deprived of original righteousness, *Rom. 7. 18.* and a perverse inclination unto all evil hath come in its place, *Gen. 6. 5.* So every mans own particular actual sins do lay him lower under this state of death, and make his delivery from it more difficult, *Jer. 43. 23.* for, saith he, *Ye were dead in sins and trespasses*: under which are comprehended, as we shew, both their original and actual sins.

Verf. 2. Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

HE proveth they were thus dead in sins and trespasses from their walking in, and making a daily trade of sin, without striving against it, or any through remorse for it: which wofull walk of theirs he doth illustrate from two guides, which they followed, and by which they were carried-on, and encouraged in their sinful course. The first was, the universal corrupt course and custom of the world (that is, of wicked men in the world, *Psal. 17. 14.*) in all ages, which had become a Law for them to walk by; The second guide was Satan, who is here called a prince; not only, because there being a number of those unclean spirits, they are joyned as one politick body among themselves under one, who is as prince and head of the rest, *Mat. 12. 24.* and *25. 41.* but also and mainly, because of that power which all the Devils, and chiefly their head and prince, have over wicked men in the world, *Job. 14. 30.* *2 Cor. 4. 4.* even over the children of disobedience, which princely power of his, is described from the place, where by God's permission

mission he doth exercise it, to wit, the region of the air; he doth exercise it also in the earth, and hell, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. and therefore these must not be here excluded, but rather included, as being below the region of the air. It is described also from the subjects of his kingdom, to wit, those, who are not only so obstinate in evil, that they cannot be perswaded by any means to relinquish it (as the word in the Original, rendred *disobedience*, implyeth) but also are judicially given over to disobedience, and fully under the power of it, which is expressed; while they are called *children of disobedience*, according to the custom of the holy language, whereby those, who are fully given over, and under the power of any vice, are said to be the children of that vice, *Hos.* 2. 4. concerning which obstinate sinners the Apostle affirmeth that the spirit of Satan did uncessantly and without intermission work most powerfully in them, by driving them unto all manner of evil without any stay or hinderance. See *Job.* 8. 41. 44. *Doct.* 1. The depth of man's naturall misery is so great, that even the renewed Children of God cannot reach it at one view, nor be sufficiently convinced of it, until the Word of the Lord do frequently inculcate and lay it forth in its wofull parcels; yea, and bear-in upon them the truth of it by most convincing reasons, taken from their own sense and experience: for, the Apostle, speaking to the converted Ephesians, seeth a necessity, not only to declare in the general that they had been dead in sins and trespasses; but also to prove it was so, and to point-forth that wofull death at large in this verse; *Wherein in time past ye walked, &c.* 2. Though even the Regenerate have a body of sin and death dwelling in them; *Rom.* 7. 24. and do sometimes actually fall in sin, yea, even very grosse sins, 2 *Sam.* 11; 4. and 12. 9. yet they do not walk in sin; that is, sin is not to the Child of God, as the way to the traveller, so as to make it his daily trade and imployment, *Psal.* 1. 1. or, to sin without any reluctancy flowing from a spirituall principle.

against that which he knoweth to be sin, *Gal. 5. 17.* And so, as to walk after sin, by making sin, and suggestions to sin his guide, whom he doth willingly follow, *Rom. 8. - 1.* although sin may conquer, and carry him as an unwilling captive, *Rom. 7. - 14 &c.* for, *Paul* maketh their walking in sin an argument to prove that they were dead in sin, and therefore it cannot fall upon the Regenerate; *Wherein in time past ye walked.* 3. Such is the power of converting grace, that it causes men change their former way and course, though they have been never so much rooted in it, and habituated to it: for, while he saith, *Wherein in time past ye walked*, he implyeth there was a change wrought, and that they did not so walk in the time present. 4. While Scripture affirmeth that Christ hath taken away the sins of the world, *Job. 1. - 29.* and is a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, *1 Job. 2. 2.* it is no cogent argument to prove, that Christ hath died for all and every one in the world; seeing the word *world* doth not alwayes, when mentioned in Scripture, comprize all who are in the world, but must be ascribed to the universality of some certain kind of people in the world, as the nature of the purpose in hand will bear: for, here the *world*, whose course the unconverted Ephesians did follow, must be the *world* of unrenewed men only, and cannot be extended so, as to comprehend the godly and renewed, who were also in the world; *Ye walked according to the course of this world.* 5. The Lord is so far from being moved with the merit or worth of those, whom He doth convert, to bestow converting grace upon them, rather than on others, whom He leaveth in their unconverted state, that He maketh this grace of His to fall upon such as are in no respect better than those whom He passeth by: for, those Ephesians before conversion *walked according to the course of this world*, that is, they were behind with none in sin and wickednesse. 6. As the generall corrupt custom and example of those with whom we live, or who have lived in the former ages of the world before us, is a strong incite-

incitement and sufficient excuse in the minds of many to follow the multitude in doing evil without further enquiry; So it argueth a man to be yet in an unrenewed estate, when he maketh the example of others the highest rule, according to which he walketh, and laboureth to conform himself unto it more than to the will of God: for, the Apostle sheweth the general custom and course of the world, was the rule by which they walked, and an encouragement to them in their walk, and maketh this an argument to prove they were then dead in sins and trespasses; *Wherein (saith he) in time past ye walked according to the course of this world.* 7. All men in their unrenewed state, are very slaves to Satan, whose wofull motions and suggestions they follow, and whom they resemble and imitate in their sin and wickednesse: for, so much is implied, while he saith, *They walked according to the prince of the power of the air*, that is, the Devil. 8. Though the Devils and fallen Angels have alwayes an hell, horror and torment in their conscience where-ever they are, *2 Pet. 2. 4.* yet they are not alwayes in hell, that place of torment, which is prepared for Devils and Reprobates, *Mat. 25. 41.* they are also present in the earth and air, and there through divine permission have no small power, even so great, as they are able to move the elements, bring down fire upon earth, *Job 1. 16.* raise storms, *Job 1. 19.* to smite mens bodies with several diseases, *Job 2. 7.* yea, and to take away the lives of men (*Job 1. 19.*) and beasts, *Mark 5. 13.* which power of theirs in its exercise, is alwayes over-ruled and limited by God, *Job 1. 12.* and *2. 6.* in so far, as His most holy and over-ruling providence doth thereby bring about His own design and purpose, which is either to execute deserved judgment upon the wicked, *Mark 5. 13, 17.* or, to exercise and try the godly, *Job 1. 12, &c.* for, Satan is called *Prince of the power of the air*, that is, who hath power in the air. 9. As the Devils are of a spiritual nature and substance, and cannot be seen by bodily eyes, but when they appear cloathed with bodies,

which belong not naturally unto them, but for a time are assumed by them, 1 Sam. 28. 14. So, the way by which Satan doth impart his temptations unto us, is not alwayes sensible, but often unperceivable by the outward senses; he doth most certainly tempt to sin, and yet the tempted sinner perceiveth him not: for, as this spiritual and unperceivable way of tempting doth follow upon his spirituall and immateriall substance; So also the words, rendred *the spirit which worketh*, may relate either to his nature, as being spiritual, or to his way of working, while he tempteth, to wit, by way of inspiration and a kind of breathing; the words may be so constructed as to bear either, though the first be mainly intended; *The spirit that now worketh*, or, *his spirit now working*. 10. Though there have been, and yet are some fair flourishes of praiseworthy vertues and actions seemingly good in men unrenewed, Rom. 2. 14. yet every unrenewed man, and chiefly those who are come to age and understanding, are very slaves to sin, and so addicted to the actual service, though not of all and every sin in particular (for, that were impossible) yet of some one idol or other, whether of their pleasure, profit, or credit; that they cannot but go on in the service of it, without all possibility of being reclaimed by any created strength: for, so much is implied, while unregenerate men are called *children of disobedience*, that is, men addicted and given over to disobedience, so that they cannot be perswaded to relinquish it. 11. Satan's way of working in, and with obstinate godlesse sinners, is most efficacious and powerful: he cannot indeed work any change upon the will, by creating new principles or habits in it, which before were not, as God doth, Jer. 31. 33. but, he can not only tempt to sin, by propounding aluring baits and objects to the outward senses, or inward fanisie, which he may do to any man, whether good or bad, 2 Sam. 11. 2. but also, when God judicially giveth over a sinner unto Satan, withdrawing even His restraining grace from him, Then doth Satan multiply his temptations without any inter-

intermission, useth the utmost of created endeavours, whereby, and through God's up-giving the sinner formerly mentioned, and because of the seed and root of all sin, which is in the sinner by nature, there is no sort of wickednesse, unto the acting whereof Satan will not get him willingly driven and carried: for, saith he, *The spirit which now* (that is, even in the mean time, constantly, and without intermitting the shortest moment, or now) *worketh in the children of disobedience*; the word doth signifie to work with pith and efficacy. 12. Though even the godly are not free from being tempted by Satan; yea, nor yet from yeelding sometimes to his temptations, 1 Chron. 21. 1, 2. yet, he doth not work efficaciously in them, and so, as is described in the former Doctrine: for, he stricteth this way of Satans working to unregenerate men; *The spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.*

Verf. 3. *Among whom also we had all our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

THE Apostle doth now apply this Doctrine to the Jews, of whom he himself was one; and therefore he designeth them by the pronoun, *We*, and affirmeth them to have been before conversion equally miserable with the Gentiles. In doing whereof, and that he may more fully explain this Doctrine of man's misery, he sheweth, first, That even they had their conversation among those children of disobedience, as being no lesse obstinately rebellious against God, than the disobedient Gentiles, following the *lusts*, or the first motions and sudden flashes of their inbred corruption (here called *flesh*) which, flowing from Adams first sin, hath infected his whole posterity (Christ alone excepted, 2 Cor. 5. 21-) and seated it self in all the powers and faculties of their souls and bodies, even the understanding and will not

being excepted, *Rom.* 8. 7. *Col.* 2. -18. for, so is the word *flesh* usually taken in the New Testament, *Joh.* 3. 6. *Gal.* 5. 13, 16. Now, all corruption and sin, even that which is in the mind, is called *flesh*; because it is conveyed by fleshly generation, *Joh.* 3. 6. the fleshly members of the body are the instruments whereby all is executed, *Rom.* 6. 19. and every sin draweth the man from God to things earthly and fleshly. Secondly, he subdivideth this inbred corruption of their natures into two heads, first, the *flesh*, particularly so called, whereby, as it is distinguished from flesh before mentioned, and opposed to the *mind* spoken of afterwards, must be meant that corruption, which is seated in the inferiour part of the soul, to wit, the sensual appetite; and next, the *mind*, whereby is meant the most noble faculties of the soul, to wit, the will and understanding, in so far as they are also corrupted. Concerning both which he affirmeth, that even the Jews in their unconverted state were fulfilling their wills and desires; by which *desires* of the flesh, as they are distinguished from the lusts of the flesh formerly mentioned, are meant their deliberate and fixed resolution to follow those lusts and suggestions of corrupt flesh, which accordingly he sheweth they did fulfill and accomplish to the utmost. And, thirdly, he pointeth at the root and fountain-cause of this their miserable slavery and subjection to sin in the lusts and desires thereof, even their natural sin and misery, whereby they were from nature, that is, from their very cradle, birth and conception, *children of wrath*, as being by reason of their original sin lyable to the stroke of God's eternal wrath, and as much lyable to it as the Gentiles were. *Dock.* 1. There is not any piece of a Minister's task wherein he hath more need of a spirit of wisdom and impartiality, than when he is about the reproof of sin, and the discovery of peoples vileness by reason of their wickedness; lest, if herein he respect persons, those whom he reflects upon most, be irritate, as conceiving themselves to be unequally dealt with, and lest others,

others, to whom he doth apply that convincing doctrine; neither so directly, nor with such an edge and vehemencie, be puffed up in their own conceit above others: for, the Apostle holdeth forth the rest of what he hath to speak upon this subject of mans misery by nature, in the person of the Jews; lest either the Gentiles had been irritated, or the Jews puffed up; *Among whom we all also had our conversation.* 2. Whatever differences may be among unregenerate men as to things civil, externals in Religion, or the particular sins unto which they are enslaved; yet all of them are alike vile in God's sight, children of disobedience, in whom Satan ruleth and worketh; in so far as they are all walking in the lusts of the flesh, following inbred corruption as their guide, and obeying it in some one or other of its lusts: for, though there was neither civil commerce, nor religious fellowship betwixt the Jews and Gentiles, *Joh. 4. 9.* though the Jews had many external religious privileges which the Gentiles did want, *Rom. 9. 4, 5.* and though some both of Jews and Gentiles were not enslaved to such vile and fleshly lusts, as others were, *Phil. 3. -6.* yet Paul pronounces of himself and all of them, that they were children of disobedience, because one way or other they followed the lusts of the flesh; *among whom also we all had our conversation in the lusts of the flesh.* 3. They, who in their unconverted estate have led a blamelesse life before the world (and therefore have thought their condition abundantly good, *Philip. 3. 7-*) will, when converting grace cometh, see themselves to have been as vile and wretched as any. They will not only see, that nothing they did was truly good and acceptable to God, as not being done in faith, *Heb. 11. 6-* but also that the root of all sin was in them, budding out without any check or restraint, except from respect to self-interest, credit, pleasure or advantage, *Mat. 14. 5.* and that the more blamelesse they were before the world, spiritual pride did abound the more, *Philip. 3. 7-* and so were more loathsome to God, *Jam. 4. 6.* for, Paul, whose

life, even in his unrenewed estate, was blamelesse, *Philip.* 3. -6. being now converted, affirmeth of himself as well as of others, *Among whom also we all in time past had our conversation in the lusts of the flesh.* 4. As the unregenerate man is powerfully tempted by Satan, and strongly encouraged by the common custome and example of others to sin against the Lord ; So there is a corrupt nature within him, which maketh him readily entertain those external incitements, yea, and which would make him do mischief, though there were not a devil to tempt, nor any evil example to be followed ; and therefore none of those allurements and temptations to sin from without, though never so strong, doth excuse the sinner ; scing they are no more ready to tempt than corrupt nature in him is willing to be tempted : for, the Apostle, having spoken of two guides of a natural man's sinfull course, which are without him, the custom of the world, and Satan's suggestions, ver. 2. he addeth here a third, which is within him, and as forward as any of the former ; *We, saith he, had our conversation in the lusts of the flesh.* 5. The whole man, both soul and body, is infected with sin by nature, so that not only the sensual part, but even his will and understanding are corrupted by it, there being not only ignorance, but also mistakes of God and good in the understanding, *1 Cor. 1. 23.* a crooked perversnesse and avernesse from that which is spiritually good, in the will, *Rom. 8. 7.* for, *Paul* reckoneth even the *mind*, to wit, as it is corrupted, to be a part of *flesh* : *fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind.* 6. There are severall degrees of sin, whereof, as the latter doth carry sin a step further on towards the height, than the former ; so the former maketh way for the latter : for, first, there is *flesh*, or the very inbred corruption of our natures. Secondly, *Lusts of the flesh*, these are the first motions of inbred corruption towards unlawfull objects, and such as go before deliberation and advice, and are forbidden, in so far as they relate to our neighbour, in the tenth Command. Thirdly, the *desires*

sires, or wills of the flesh, which are somewhat more, even the hearts through-consent to the sinfull motion, and a fixed resolution to act it after deliberation and advice, and is that kind of lust spoken-of, *Matth. 5. 28.* And, lastly, the *fulfilling* those wills and desires of the flesh, that is, the actual committing of sin so resolved upon.

7. Every unregenerate man, come to age and discretion, is a slave to sin in all the fore-mentioned degrees; for, *Paul* affirmeth here of himself, the Jews and Gentiles before conversion, that not only *flesh* was in them, which did lust after unlawfull objects, but that those lusts did come the length of fixed resolutions and desires, yea, and that they did fulfill and accomplish them: for, though civilians do not fulfill the lusts of the fleshly appetite; yet they fulfill the desires of the mind by their pride, vanity of spirit, self-seeking and such like; *We all had our conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind.* 8. As all men are guilty of original sin by nature, and from the first moment of their conception, *Psal. 51. 5.* and therefore, in the course of divine justice, liable to the stroke of God's vindictive wrath and anger, and this by nature also; So the misery of unregenerate men is never sufficiently seen, untill it be traced up to this bitter root and fountain, even the sin and misery wherein they were born: for, his saying they were children of wrath by nature, implyeth they were also sinners by nature; seeing wrath doth alwayes follow upon sin, and this he reserveith last, as that which was the root, fountain and head-stone of all their misery; *And were by nature the children of wrath.*

9. Though those, who are borne within the visible Church, have a right to Church-priviledges even from their birth, and by nature, which others have not (See *Gal. 2. Ver. 15. Doct. 1.*) yet all men, whether born within, or without the Church, are alike by nature, as to the point of original sin inherent in all, and the desert of God's wrath following upon that sin, which wrath is due to all: for, saith he, speaking of the Jews, *We were by*

by nature the children of wrath, even as others, by which others he meaneth the unchurched Gentiles.

Verf. 4. But God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,

5. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickned us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)

THe Apostle, having already set forth that miserable state, wherein both Jew and Gentile were by nature, and before conversion, he doth in the second place hold forth their delivery from that wofull state, and that in such a lively, ravishing and comprehensive strain of speech, as might not only inform their judgments, but also work upon their affections to imbrace and adhere unto those truths which he here delivereth, according to his intended scope. And, first, (ver. 4.) he declareth God to have been the prime author and efficient cause of their delivery, whom he calleth *rich in mercy*, to shew that He was acted herein, not from their worth, but His own abundant mercy, which attribute of mercy doth speak His favour and good-will, with relation to His Peoples miserie. And withall, he sheweth that it was only His great and ancient love towards them, which set His mercy on work in order to their delivery.

Next (ver. 5.) having resumed what he spoke of their miserable case, ver. 1. (but so, as he applyeth what was there spoken of the Gentiles only, unto himself and the other Jews, according to what was held forth, ver. 3.) he propoundeth the first branch of their delivery, to wit, *God's quickning of them together with Christ*, whereby is meant the Lord's work of regeneration, and bestowing upon them a spiritual life of grace, in opposition to that spiritual death formerly spoken of, together with all those benefits which accompany and flow from regeneration in this life. And they are said to have been quickned with Christ, though not in their own persons, (for they were so quickned a long time after Christ's resurrection,

urrection, in their effectual calling) but they were then quickned in their head and attorney Jesus Christ, whose quickning after death was a sure pledge that they, every one in his own time, should be quickned also, *1 Cor. 15. 20.* ~~and that~~ the vertue purchased by Christs death, *Rom. 8. 11.* and to be applyed unto them by Him, who is now alive, and liveth for evermore for that end, *Heb. 7. 25.* And therefore the Apostle expresseth Gods bestowing of this spiritual life upon them, by His quickning them with Christ. And before he mention the other pieces of their delivery, he doth in the close of this vers. ascribe the whole work of their salvation to Gods free grace, which is the same in effect with His mercy and love spoken of, ver. 4. Only it further expresseth the freedom of those, in opposition to any merit or worth in the persons to be saved, which might procure their salvation. *Dott. 1.* The Ministers of Christ would not only inculcate the doctrine of sin and misery, but, having insisted so much upon this subject as may serve to bring down that high conceit which people naturally have of their own righteousness, and to convince them of their need of Jesus Christ a Saviour, Then is it timous for them to open up the riches of Gods free grace *reasonable* and good will, to save the vilest of sinners, and what He hath freely done for bringing about salvation to their hand: for, the Apostle, having set forth unto the life the natural misery of those Ephesians, doth now open up the rich treasures of Gods free grace in Christ; *But God who is rich in mercy.* 2. The Lords Ministers when they fall upon this subject of Gods delivering lost sinners from their natural state of sin and misery through Christ, they would labour to speak to it so fully, affectionately, sensibly, and with such life and power, as that they may not only inform the understandings of the Lords People in those truths, but also inflame their affections with love to them, and admiration at the wisdom, mercy, goodness and other attributes of God manifested in this work: for, so doth the Apostle speak of this purpose, not

not simply by saying God hath quickned us, but *God who is rich in mercy, according to His great love*, and so forward in the two following verses. 3. There is nothing contributeth more to inable a Minister to speak to the commendation of God's free grace in the salvation of sinners with that fulnesse, sense, life and affection, as he ought, than a deep insight in his own misery, and the great need which he himself doth stand in of God's mercy: for, *Paul*, in the third verse fore-going, doth shew how sensible he was of the depth and breadth of his own misery; hence he doth here speak so fully and movingly to the present purpose; *But God who is rich in mercy, &c.* 4. The quickning of sinners, and drawing them out of nature unto grace is only God's work, there being no lesse required for bringing this about, than omnipotent creating power; See ver. 10. And there being not only no principle left in man, who is by nature dead in sins and trespasses, whereby he might work or concur with God in working towards his own quickning, *Rom.* 9. 16. but also much to oppose and resist it, *2 Cor.* 10. 5. So that in the first instant of his conversion, and untill a new heart be given him, and the seeds and habits of saving graces infused in him, he is wholly passive, as to any actual influence upon the effect which is wrought, *Jer.* 31. 33. for, *Paul* here, condescending upon the cause of their quickning, doth pitch, not upon their own free will in whole, or in part, but upon God only, while he saith, *But God who is rich in mercy--- hath quickned us.* 5. This attribute of mercy in God, whereby without any grief or perturbation of mind, (which accompanieth men in the exercise of mercy) he hath a propension and inclination to do good to the sinfull and miserable, so far as His wisdom seeth convenient, is the only thing in opposition unto all that is in a mans self, which moveth God to quicken and bestow grace upon dead and gracelesse sinners: for, the Apostle, speaking of God's quickning of those Ephesians, describeth Him from His mercy, to shew it was not their worth, but His
own

own mercy, which moved Him to quicken them; *But God who is rich in mercy--bath quickned us.* 6. As God is rich and overflowing in the exercise of this attribute of *mercy*, which will appear, if we consider that there is no creature towards which He doth not exercise His mercy, *Psal.* 104. 24. and that mercy is exercised, not only without, but also often contrary to the deserving of those upon whom it is exercised, *Ezek.* 36. 21, 22. so there is nothing wherein God doth more manifest the riches and abundance of His mercy, than in the work of quickning dead sinners, and of carrying on the work of grace in them, untill it be perfected in glory. The misery (*Ezek.* 16. 3, &c.) and bad deservings of the object, (*Jer.* 14. 7.) the great good things which are bestowed upon those miserable objects, (*Luke* 12. 32.) the course taken for satisfying divine justice, that so those good things might be, without wronging of justice, bestowed, (*Job.* 3. 16.) and the multitude of sins, which mercy covereth in those objects, not only before their conversion, (*Isa.* 55. 7.) but also after it, *Prov.* 24. 16. All these, and many considerations besides these, do manifest God to be rich in mercy in quickning of dead sinners; *But God who is rich in mercy--bath quickned us.* 7. The highest cause which moveth God to manifest this His rich and special mercy upon any of lost mankind, and from mercy to quicken them, and bestow His saving graces on them, was His love towards them: which is no other than His will and resolution to impart those good things unto them, together with His hearty acquiescence in the thing, as that wherewith He is well pleased. He did it because He would do it, resolved to do it, and had pleasure in the doing of it: for, saith he, *God who is rich in mercy for His great love--bath quickned us.* 8. As God's love towards those whom He converteth doth not begin when they are converted, but is of a more ancient, even an eternal rise, chap. 1. 4. So it is not an ordinary, but a great love wherewith He loveth them. The infinit distance betwixt Him and them (*Psal.* 8. 4.) His loving

loving them when they were yet enemies, (*Rom. 5. 8.*) the great things bestowed by His love (*Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8.*) and His unchangeableness in His love, even notwithstanding of great provocations to the contrary, *Psal. 89. 33.* All these, and many besides these, do abundantly declare, that this love is a great, wonderfull, and matchlesse love: for, saith he, *For His great love, wherewith He loved us.* 9. The Lord hath love to the Elect, even when they are children of wrath, and liable in the course of justice to the stroke of His vindictive anger: for, although God could not, with safety of His own justice, bestow Heaven upon them, when they were actually such; yet nothing hindereth, why He might not love them being such, that is, have a will and fixed resolution, even when they were liable unto wrath, to bestow Heaven upon them, having first from that same love given His own Son to deliver them from that state of wrath; that so what eternal love had resolved to give them, might be actually bestowed upon them, without doing injury to divine justice: for, ver. 3. he sheweth they were children of wrath, and here, that God loved them, and both these before He quickned them; *Wherewith He loved us*, saith he, even in the by-past time. 10. The doctrine of our natural misery, and spirituall death through sin, is a lesson most necessary to be learned, which we have no great pleasure to learn, and which we are prone to forget, as to a deep and lively impression of it, even when it is learned: for, the Apostle's repeating this doctrine, almost in the same words, by which he had expressed it, ver. 1. doth hint at all these; *Even when we were dead in sins*, saith he. 11. There is no application of the doctrine of God's mercy in order to our delivery from sin and misery, except the doctrine of sin and misery be first applied and taken with: for, *Paul*, being to apply God's mercy in quickning sinners, unto himself and his country-men the believing Jews, he doth first apply the doctrine of natural sin and misery unto them, while he doth now speak of himself and the Jews

Jews also, whereas (ver. 1.) he spoke of the Gentiles only, as appeareth by the change of the person; *Even when we were dead in sins, bath quickned us.* 12. What-ever a man be before his conversion, as to the point of civility and right use of his natural parts; yet, he is looked upon by God when He cometh to quicken him, as one dead in sins, who can neither help himself, nor merit help at God's hand: for, therefore doth the Apostle assert that they were dead in sins immediatly before, yea, and in the act of God's quickning of them, while he saith, *Even when we were dead in sins, He bath quickned us.* 13. The state of grace, which sinners, dead by nature, are brought unto at their conversion, and wherein they continue untill death, is a state of life; the sentence of eternall death which they were liable unto (ver. -3-) being taken off, *Rom. 8. 1.* there being also new principles and powers infused in them at their effectuall calling, whereby they are enabled to do those actions of a spiritual life, *Ezek. 36. 26, 27.* which powers are also continually actuated and excited to their work by renewed influence from the Spirit of God, *Philip. 2. 13.* and accompanied oftentimes in their actings with assurance of God's love (*Rom. 8. 16.*) peace of conscience (*Rom. 5. 1, 2.*) and joy unspeakable and full of glory, *1 Pet. 1. 8.* whereby also they have not only a right unto (*Job. 3. 16.*) but also the first fruits and begun possession of eternall life, *Job. 17. 3.* for, the Apostle expresseth God's bringing them to, and continuing them in the state of grace by His quickning of them; *bath quickned us*, saith he. 14. Though love and mercy in God do set Him on work to quicken dead sinners; yet this work cannot be brought about or accomplished without the intervention of Christ's merit and intercession, who behaved to satisfie divine justice, and thereby acquire unto us those things which love and mercy had prepared for us, *Isa. 53. 5.* seeing they were all lost in Adam, *Rom. 5. 15, 16.* and who, being now exalted, doth also apply them to us, *Act. 5. 31.* for, notwithstanding of what was said (ver.

(ver. 4.) of God's mercy and love, as the inward impulsive causes moving God to quicken them; yet the Apostle here sheweth, that their actual quickning had a necessary dependance upon Christ's merit and mediation, while he saith, *He hath quickned us together with Christ.* 15. That Jesus Christ behoved of necessity to strike in with His merit and mediation, hereby to acquire and apply saving grace and salvation unto us, doth in nothing hinder, but that notwithstanding our complete salvation, from the first step unto the last, doth wholly flow from God's free grace; seeing it was of grace that the Father did send the Son to die for us, *Joh. 3. 16.* It was of grace that the Son did undertake, *Joh. 15. 12. 13.* And it is no lesse grace, that what He did or suffered should be accepted in our name, *Rom. 3. 24, 25.* So that all is of grace and free good-will, as to us: for, the Apostle, having pointed at the necessity of Christ's mediation, in order to their quickning, doth presently add, as in a parenthesis, *by grace are ye saved.* 16. There is an infallible connexion betwixt converting grace and salvation; so that all those, who are now converted and quickned, shall be undoubtedly saved: for, what the Apostle calleth *quickned* in the former part of the verse he calleth *saved* in the close, so that he taketh the one for the other; *He hath quickned us--- By grace are ye saved.*

Verf. 6. And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

HERE are the other two branches of their delivery, to wit, first, The raising of their bodies at the last day; for, their spiritual resurrection from the death of sin to newnesse of life was mentioned, ver. 5. Secondly, Their glorification in Heaven: both which are yet to come, *2 Tim. 2. 18. Mat. 25. 34.* And yet he speaketh of them as already past, when the Father raised and glorified Christ; because, seeing Christ, in His resurrection and

entring

entering of heaven, did sustain a publick person, representing all the Elect, as their Head and Attorney-generall, *Job. 10. 15.* Therefore He was judicially looked upon by God in those actions, as if all the Elect had risen when He rose, and taken possession of Heaven, when He did enter it: Hence it is, that in the close of the verse it is added, *in Christ*, to shew we are not yet raised and glorified in our own persons, but in Christ our Head. And the Spirit of God doth choose to set forth their future resurrection and glorification, by shewing these are already accomplished in Christ their Head, rather than by saying, God shall raise them up and glorifie them, that he may with one and the same labour point out the dependencie which their resurrection and glorification have upon Christs, as the effect upon the cause, the thing promised upon the pledge thereof, as also the undoubted certainty that those shall come to passe, a certainty greater than that of a simple prediction and promise, even such certainty, as the giving of a pledge, and holding forth of an effectually and necessary cause do give for performance of the thing promised; for, Christs resurrection is both a pledge, (*1 Cor. 15. 20.*) and cause of our resurrection, *Rom. 8. 11.* which holdeth also in His glorification.

Dott. 1. The fruits and effects of Gods eternal love and mercy, and of Christs merit toward the Elect, are not confined within this present life, but are in a great part to have their accomplishment after time, when the bodies of Believers shall be raised up in glory at the last day, and they perfectly glorified with Christ in Heaven for ever: for, those two fruits of the Fathers love, and of Christs merit, even the Resurrection and Glorification of Believers, are here expressed, while it is said, *and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places.* 2. Those, and those only shall partake of the resurrection of the just, which is to life everlasting, *Job. 5. 29.* And shall be glorified hereafter, whom God doth quicken by converting grace here: for, those three

parts of the delivery of lost sinners, are of equal latitudes; *He hath quickened us, raised us up, and made us sit in heavenly places.* 3. As it is a thing full of difficulty to be believed, that after worms have consumed this flesh of ours, it shall be raised up in glory, and that we, who are heirs of hell, and children of wrath, shall one day reign with Christ for ever; so those are things, not only sure in themselves, but which the Lord would have converted and quickened Believers assured of; that so their comfort under crosses might be more abounding, 2 *Cor.* 4. 14. with 16, 17, 18. and their courage against death more strong, 1 *Thess.* 4. 18. and that they in all things may live as becometh those who not only shall rise, and take possession of glory in their own persons, but also are already risen and glorified with, and in Christ their Head, *Col.* 3. 1, even by having their conversation in Heaven, while they are yet upon earth, *Philip.* 3. 20. for, that they might be perswaded of their future resurrection and glorification, the Spirit of God doth speak of them as already done, *viz.* in the sense given in the exposition; *He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places.*

Verf. 7. That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindnesse towards us through Christ Jesus.

THe Apostle, thirdly, propoundeth the final cause, or the end intended by God to be brought about by His gracious working, formerly mentioned, towards those Ephesians and first Converts among the Jews, even that in all ages succeeding the present unto the end of the world, God might give an evident proof, and infallible demonstration (for, so much doth the word rendered *shew* signifie) of the *exceeding riches of His grace*, that is, how far the abundance of His mercy and favour toward sinners doth exceed all expression and created comprehension, the setting forth whereof to the following ages, was intended by God, not only for His own glory

as chap. 1. 12. -14. but also for the encouragement of all vile sinners unto the worlds end, to draw nigh unto God for mercy in Christ, as being animated hereto by this example and infallible evidence of the exceeding riches of Gods grace; for so doth the Apostle more fully explain his own meaning, 1 Tim. 1. 16. And in the close of the verse, he sheweth wherein that convincing evidence doth lye, by giving a short comprehensive sum of all he hath spoken from the beginning of the Chapter, even in God's *kindnesse*, that is, all those effects formerly mentioned of His mercy, love and free grace, flowing from His good, gentle and bountifull disposition; and this, *towards them*, whose misery was formerly described; and *through Christ*, as the purchaser and applier of all those. *Doct. 1.* As there is grace, yea riches and abundance of grace in God, even such as exceed all expression. 2 Sam. 7. 20. all comprehension, Isa. 55. 9. yea, and all the sins of creatures, Rom. 5. 20. So, the more a man doth dwell upon this sweet subject, his thoughts and apprehensions of it will be the more enlarged, and his expressions also will in some measure go alongs with his thoughts: for, the Apostle, having before (ver. 4.) expressed it under the name of riches in mercy, and falling here upon the same subject again, his thoughts of it are more enlarged, and his expression doth rise accordingly; so that it is now, not only *riches*, but *exceeding riches of his grace*. 2. As it is a matter full of difficulty for those who are sensible of their own vileness, to believe the exceeding riches of Gods grace towards lost sinners, and to believe it especially with application unto themselves, *Act. 2. 37.* So, the particular instances and examples of Gods mercy and grace towards others, have a peculiar fitnesse and efficacy in them to convince us, how exceedingly gracious God is, and so to convince us, as we may be encouraged to draw nigh to that same fountain of rich grace for pardon and life unto our selves, 1 Tim. 1. 16. a fitnesse beyond what is in the simple doctrinal declaration of those riches of grace:

in so far as those instances and examples do speak, not only that mercy and grace may be had, but that it hath been attained unto, and by those, who in all respects did judge themselves, and were really as unworthy of it, as unable to lay hold upon it in the mean time, and to make good use of it afterwards, as we do judge ourselves; so that the yce is broken, and the foord ridden before us: for, the Apostle sheweth, that God gave such instances of mercy and grace in those primitive Christians, that he *might shew forth*, as it were, by demonstration and evidence, *the exceeding riches of His grace*, and this in order to the encouragement of others to venture their salvation upon that same grace; as we shew in the Exposition.

3. The more sinfull, miserable and wretched they are, to whom the Lord is gracious, there is the more convincing proof given of the exceeding riches of His grace, and so a greater encouragement for those who are yet in their gracelesse state to roll themselves over upon this His rich grace, and to expect good from it: for, it was the quickening of such vile sinners, whose misery is described, ver. 1, 2, 3. which did tend to shew forth the exceeding riches of His grace, which the Apostle also hinteth at, while, shewing wherein that convincing evidence did lye, he saith *his kindnesse towards us*: the word, *us*, is emphaticke as to the purpose in hand.

4. It was a thing resolved upon by God, revealed to His servants, and accordingly made known by them to the Church, that the glorious light of the Gospel, though opposed by the fury and industry of men and devils; yet should never be totally extinct, but was to be preached, believed, and obeyed in some places at least of the world throughout all ages to the worlds end: for, the Apostle sheweth it was Gods design to have the exceeding riches of His grace shown forth in all succeeding ages and generations; *that in the ages to come he might shew*.

5. Gods bypast dealing, whether in mercy, or judgement (1 Corin. 10. 6.) are speaking lessons unto those who are in the ages following

ing, as holding forth both matter of praise unto God manifested in those, *Psal.* 136. 10. &c. as also matter of instruction, in our duty, to us, *1 Cor.* 10. 6. So that the after-ages, in this respect, are better ages than the former, in so far as the latter have the advantage of those examples in the former ages, which they themselves did want; for, the Apostle sheweth, the benefit of God's gracious dealing with Believers in the present age, should accresce unto the following ages; *That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace.* 6. As all those benefits which come to Believers, do flow from the *kindnesse* of God, or His native willingness to imploy what goodnesse is in Him for the good of His creatures; So, though the effects of His generall kindnesse and benevolence, which are common to all the creatures, *Psal.* 145. 9. do flow from God, as Creator, in the channel of common providence, *Psal.* 104. 28. yet, the effects of His speciall kindnesse, and such as relate to life and godlinesse, do all of them flow from God, as reconciled through Christ, and are convoyed through the conduit of Christs merit and intercession: for, the Apostle, summing up all these saving benefits, together with the way how they are convoyed, he saith, *In his kindnesse towards us through Christ Jesus.* 7. The lively and serious consideration of those excellent benefits flowing from Gods mercy, grace, goodwill and bounty, together with the consideration of the vileness and wretchednesse of those, upon whom those excellent benefits are bestowed, and of the way which infinit Wisdom, set on work by eternal love, hath found out for convoying those so excellent mercies to such base and unworthy objects, even the incarnation, obedience, sufferings and high exaltation of Jesus Christ; I say, it is the consideration of all those joyntly, which tendeth to set forth most convincingly how exceedingly gracious God is: for, the Apostle sheweth this convincing evidence doth lye in those three, first, *in his kindnesse*, secondly, *towards us*, thirdly, *through Jesus Christ.*

Verf. 8. For by *grace* are ye saved, through *faith*, and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God:

THe Apostle, Fourthly, While he giveth a reason of what is said, ver. 7. (as appeareth by the causall particle, *for*) doth sum up all which hath been spoken from ver. 4. in this one comprehensive proposition, that their compleat salvation, from the first step unto the last, did flow from Gods grace and favour (*for*, by *grace* here must be meaned Gods free favour and grace in him, not the effects of this grace, good works, or grace inherent in us; for those are expressly excluded, ver. 9.) and withall, that they were so saved by grace, as faith was not excluded; This grace of faith being the hand, or instrument, whereby we lay hold upon, and apply to our selves Jesus Christ, and His righteousness offered freely in the Gospel, in order to our salvation, *Rom. 3. 25.* And, Secondly, Because the establisshing of them in this truth, is his main scope through the whole first part of the Epistle, therefore he doth here, not only explain in what sense salvation doth flow from grace, but also doth expressly confirm it by arguments, First, by removing all things in generall, which could be called theirs, whether prerogative, priviledge, naturall or acquired worth, from being the meritorious procuring cause of their salvation, or of any part of it; the truth whereof is more than evident from what is said of their spirituall death in sins and trespasses, ver. 1, 2, 3. and therefore he needeth not bring any new argument to prove it. Secondly, by asserting from that same ground, that their salvation was Gods gift, and therefore it behoved to be free, and of grace, else it could not be a gift. *Doct. 1.* Though the ascribing of salvation unto works, is not wholly inconsistent with, and destructive of Gods grace from having any influence upon salvation, seeing *Adam's* salvation, even according to the tenor of the Covenant of works, had been

been also of grace in some respect, it being of grace that God did enter any Covenant with man at all, and of grace also that He did accept, even of mans perfect obedience so, as upon his performance of it to make him sure of eternall life; yet the ascribing of salvation, or any part of it unto the merit or worth of works, doth obscure, and is inconsistent with that exceeding riches of grace, which God intendeth to set forth by that way of salvation, which is propounded in the Covenant of Grace: for, the Apostle being here to prove, that Gods way of saving those Ephesians, was a fit mean to set forth the exceeding riches of His grace, giveth this for a reason, even that their salvation did flow only from grace, and from nothing in themselves, nor any work of theirs, So that if it did not flow only from grace, and from nothing in themselves, it could not demonstrate those exceeding riches of His grace: for, saith he, *ye are saved by grace, and that not of your selves; not of works.* 2. Whatever differences may be among severall persons in other things; yet all come of *Adam* by ordinary generation, are equall, as in their common misery by nature; so in the way of their delivery from that misery by free grace through a Redeemer, there being no other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we can be saved, but the name of *Jesus*, *Act. 4. 12.* for, therefore doth the Apostle so frequently change the person in this first part of the Chapter, while he sometimes speaketh of the Ephesians and Gentiles alone in the second person, as, ver. 1. sometimes of himself, and of the Jews with them in the first person, as ver. 5, 6. not, as if some part of the purpose did belong only to the one alone, and some part of it unto both joyntly: for in one and the same purpose he changeth the person, as while he giveth a reason in this verse, of what he spoke ver. 7. but rather to shew, that the purpose here insisted on, which is mans misery by nature, and their delivery from that misery by free grace and Christ, doth belong equally to Jew and Gentile: and therefore he

standeth not much to which of them he doth speak; for by grace are ye saved, saith he. 3. As Believers are in some sense already saved, not only because they have salvation begun in their new birth, which is a passing from death unto life, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. but also they have compleat salvation in right and title, 1 *Corinth.* 3. 21, 22. and in the earnest of it, *Eph.* 1. 14. So, the whole work of their salvation, from its first step in regeneration unto its last step in their glorification, doth intirely flow from Gods free grace, and from none of their worth: for, he saith, *ye are saved*, in the time bypast, and ascribeth it to grace, *by grace ye are saved*. 4. The maintaining of the interest of free grace in our salvation, as being the alone impulsive cause thereof, in opposition to our worth, is a thing that the Spirit of the Lord is very carefull of, the glory of His free grace being all which He seeketh after in our salvation, chap. 1. 6. and a thing, which men do naturally encline to intrench upon, and to rob Him of, either in whole or in part, *Rom.* 10. 3. for, therefore doth the Apostle so frequently shew the dependance which salvation hath upon Gods mercy, love and free grace, ver. 4. - 5. and here, *by grace are ye saved*. 5. Free grace. and faith do well agree in the bringing about our salvation: neither is salvation the lesse of free grace, that it is also of faith; seing faith is not only a fruit of Gods grace in us, *Phil.* 1. 29. but also and mainly, because faith doth not justifie, or save us for any worth in it self, or as it is a work, (for, all works are excluded, ver. 9.) but for the worth of its object, Jesus Christ, and of His righteousness, *Rom.* 5. - 19. which faith apprehendeth, *Philip.* 3. 9. for, the Apostle ascribeth their salvation both to grace and faith; *ye are saved by grace through faith*. 6. Though Gods free grace, favour and goodwill doth freely bestow that salvation upon the Elect, which Christ by His merit hath purchased; yet the Wisdom of God hath thought it fitting, that this salvation shall not be actually bestowed, untill the person to be saved, do lay hold by faith upon

upon the offer of salvation in the Gospel, and of Christs righteoufnesse, whereby salvation is acquired, that so the heirs of glory may not only have a right to heaven by faith, before they come to the actuall possession of it, *Job. 3. 16.* but also be made meet to partake of that heavenly inheritance, *Col. 1. 12.* their natures being renewed, when the habit of faith is wrought in them by God, *2 Corintb. 5. 17.* and their hearts also being purified by the exercise of that grace, *Acts 15. 9.* for, saith he, *by grace are ye saved through faith.* 7. The ascribing of salvation to Gods free grace; though it doth not exclude Christs merit, and the act of faith, as imbracing the righteoufnesse of Christ (See *Doct. 5.*) Yet it excludeth all things in our selves, whether dignity of our natures, the enjoyment of civil, or ecclesiastick privileges, nobility of descent, all our common, or more speciall gifts and induements, whether of nature or grace, from having any meritorious, or causall influence in bestowing, either a right to salvation, or the possession of it: for, *Paul* opposeth these two, *by grace are ye saved and that not of your selves.* 8. As heaven and salvation are Gods gift; so they are such a gift, as is freely given by God, who is not induced thereto by any thing in the person to whom it is given, whether sense of benefit already received, or hope of any benefit to be received from Him in time coming, which occasioneth the bestowing of gifts among men; salvation is indeed a gift, but not such a gift: for, it is a gift without all rise from any thing in our selves; *And that not of your selves, it is the gift of God,* saith he.

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Verl. 9. Not of works, lest any man should boast.

HE further explaineth in what sense their salvation did come from free grace, and proveth it by other two arguments, which do also confirm the two former. The first, taken from the removeall of those things in particular from having any meritorious, or causall influence

fluence upon their salvation, which all men have, a kind of naturall propension to rely upon for salvation; to wit, their works, and those even their good works; for, so doth he explain himself, ver. 10. whence it followeth, that they were saved of grace, and not of themselves. The second is taken from the end aimed at by God in contriving the plot of lost mans salvation, to wit, that all ground of gloriation might be taken away from man, as being, in the meanest respect, a saviour to himself, and that all the glory might be ascribed compleatly unto God in Christ: (See, 1 Cor. 1. 30, 31.) which end could not have been obtained, except they had been saved by grace, and not of themselves. *Doct. 1.* Though the word *grace*, in Scripture, be sometimes taken for the saving graces of Gods Spirit in us, 2 Pet. 3. 18. yet, when salvation is ascribed unto Gods grace, we are alwayes to understand *grace* in God, that is, His free favour and goodwill, and not *grace* inherent in us, or good works, the exercise of that grace: for, the Apostle establisheth grace, ascribing our salvation to it, and excludeth grace inherent and good works, which were inconsistent, if they were the self same thing; *Not of works*, saith he. 2. The salvation of Believers doth so much flow from free grace, as that all works of theirs, even their good works, are thereby excluded from having any meritorious influence upon it: for, even our best works are imperfect, Isa. 64. 6. they are a debt, which we owe unto God, Luk. 17. 10. the power and activity whereby we do them, is given of God, Phil. 2. 13. and therefore we can merit nothing, and least of all salvation by them at Gods hand; Thus the Apostle explaineth how we are saved by grace, even so as to exclude all works; *Not of works*, saith he. 3. Though a man may boast and glory of the good things which God hath given him, in some respects, (See upon Gal. 6. ver. 4. doct. 5.) Yet the way wherein salvation is conveyed unto sinners, is so contrived, that no ground is left for man to boast in him-
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self for any thing, which his wisdom, goodnesse, power, or worth do contribute for bringing of his own salvation about, either in part or in whole: From the first step thereof, election, unto the last, his glorification, man and his worth are still depressed, and God and His free grace alwayes exalted; for, the Apostle sheweth this was the end God did aim at, even *least any man should boast*. 4. In so far as works, even good works have place in the matter of mans salvation, so far hath man matter of boasting, and ascribing the glory of his salvation to himself, and holding back the glory of it from God: for, although good works do come wholly from the Spirit of God, in so far as they are good; yet they are our works, in so far as they are wrought by us, being now renewed and enabled to work by influence from God; and therefore heaven and salvation should in that case be given unto us for the vertue and worth of somewhat which is ours; for, *Paul* affirmeth that works, even good works, which *we are created unto in Christ Jesus*, ver. 10. are excluded from having any causall influence upon salvation; *least any man should boast*, implying, if works were not excluded, man should have ground of boasting. See, *Rom.* 3. 27.

Verf. 10. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

LEst the Apostle, by commending grace and excluding works from being the cause of their salvation, should have seemed to justle out works, and an holy life, as altogether unnecessary; Therefore, in this verse he sheweth that the study of good works is of absolute necessity required in those who are to be saved; because all such, whether Jew or Gentile, (for, he speaketh in the first person, including himself and the believing Jews) are Gods *workmanship*, that is, renewed, and made over again by Gods createing power through the inter-

interveneing mediation of Christ Jesus, and this of purpose; that they may make conscience of good works: yea, and further, God, who had predestinated them to heaven, had also decreed and prepared good works for them, as the way wherein they beloved of necessity to walk in their journey to heaven: which as it proveth the undeniable necessity of good works; so it also confirmeth that they neither were, nor could be saved by works; because the power whereby they did good works, did follow upon their regeneration, and was given them freely by God. As also, God had prepared good works, that they should walk towards heaven in them, but not to merit heaven by them. *Doct. 1.* Believers are Gods workmanship, not only by naturall creation, but supernaturall renovation; they are not only once made, but made over again; not by having the substance of their soul and naturall powers thereof destroyed, and new ones, substantially different from those, substituted in their place, but by having the vicious qualities, which were in those, subdued and weakened, and contrary graces and vertues implanted in their stead, *Eph. 4. 22, 23, 24.* for, saith Paul, *we are His workmanship*: the word signifieth a thing of His making, whereby he meaneth, not Gods first making of them as men, but His making of them over again as renewed men, which appeareth from what followeth, His creating them in Christ, and unto good works.

2. As the making of sinners over again and new creatures, is only Gods work; So the power, whereby He so maketh us, is no lesse than creating power, much like unto that power whereby in the beginning He made some things of nothing, and some things of pre-existing matter, but such as was wholly unfit and indisposed for those things to be made of it, *Gen. 2. 7.* considering, that in this great and mighty work of God He maketh those, who were wholly indisposed to good, and averse from it, (*Psal. 81. 11.*) yea perverse resisters of all motions towards that which is godly and holy.

(Job 21. 14.) to be true lovers of it, and walkers in it: for, this much is implied, while he saith, *we are His workmanship, created, &c.* 3. Christ behoved to strike in as Mediator betwixt God and us, before we could be made this new workmanship; the life, which we have by this new creation, being purchased by His death, 1 Job. 4. 9. and applied unto us by His power, after He is now arisen from death, *Act. 5. 31.* The furniture, whereupon the actions of this life are performed, coming also from Him, *Job 15. -5.* for, saith he, *we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.* 4. Believers are made new creatures, not to live idly, or to work wickedly, but that they may in the whole course of their life make conscience of good works: which are not only works of charity, or duties of immediate worship, but every duty, whether of worship, (*Act. 10. -2.*) or of our callings (*Act. 9. 36. 39.*) whether to God, or man, or to our selves, (*Tit. 2. 12.*) which is warranted in the Word as lawfull, or commanded as necessary, (*Mic. 6. 8.*) gone about by a man regenerate, and in Christ, (*Mat. 7. 17, 18.*) by vertue of influence from the Spirit of Christ, (*Phil. 2. 13.*) for Gods glory, as the main end of the worker, (*1 Cor. 10. 31.*) and with due respect had to all necessary circumstances, *Psal. 1. -3.* every duty of that kind, so gone about, is a good work, which Paul saith *they were created unto in Christ Jesus, even unto good works.* 5. Though many actions of unregenerate men are materially good, and very usefull both for themselves and others, *Rom. 2. 14.* yet no unregenerate man can do any work, which is spiritually good and acceptable to God: even their good works are but shining sins, as being destitute of a great part of these necessary requisites unto a good work, mentioned in the former Doctrine: for, Paul sheweth that a man must be a new creature and Gods workmanship, before he can do a good work; for, *we are,* saith he, *Gods workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works:* 6. Though good works be not necessary to merit or purchase

purchase salvation; yet are they necessary unto those who are justified and saved, in severall respects, not only as they are the necessary fruit and end of regeneration, and as they are the way which leadeth to heaven (their necessity in both which respects is grounded upon the present Scripture) but they are necessary also, as evidences of our right to salvation, *1 Joh. 3. 14.* as a guard to preserve peace with our own consciences, *2 Cor. 1. 12.* as evidences of our thankfulness to God and Christ, who hath freely saved us, *1 Pet. 2. 9.* and for the edification of others, *Matth. 5. 16.* for, the Apostle's scope is to prove, that as we are not saved by works, so that good works are necessary in other respects; *We are created unto good works, which He hath fore-ordained, that we should walk in them.* 7. Christians are like unto those who walk in a journey from one place unto another, through a streight and beaten way which lyeth betwixt, in so far as they advance from sin (*Ezek. 18. 31.*) to heaven, (*Phil. 3. 14.*) in the way of holiness and good works: for, the word rendered to walk, whereby he expresseth what should be the daily exercise of a renewed man, is a metaphore taken from those who travell in a journey, and he maketh the way wherein they walk to be good works; *which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.* 8. The Lord hath prepared, and made ready good works, as a beaten path, wherein His renewed people may walk without any discouraging or perplexing difficulty, in so far, as He not only hath ordained in His eternall and unchangeable decree, that they shall make conscience of good works, which seemeth to be mainly meant by His fore-ordaining of good works here spoken of, but He doth also hold forth the rule of good works in His Word, *Psal. 119. 9.* and by examples also, which make the rule more easie to be followed, *Heb. 12. 1.* He reneweth their wills, and furnisheth them with inward power and ability to do these works, *Ezek. 36. 27.* and exciteth and actuateth that power by His renewed

renewed influence, thereby making it to work, *Philip. 2. 13.* In all which respects, good works may be said to be prepared by God, as the word, rendred *fore-ordained*, may also read; *which God hath fore-ordained*, or prepared, *that we should walk in them.*

Verf. 11. Wherefore remember that ye being in time passed Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands.

HERE beginneth the second part of the Chapter, where the Apostle, for the further establishment of those Ephesians in the Doctrine of salvation through free grace in Christ, doth more largely insist upon the former purpose contained in the first part of the Chapter, with a more particular application of it to the Ephesians, and in them to all the Gentiles. And, first, (by exhorting them to remember their former misery, while they were in Gentilisme) he giveth, in this and the following verse, a most lively description of their then miserable state, as first, that they were *in the flesh*, that is, the flesh of their foreskine not being cut off by circumcision, they were not only destituted of that ordinance, but also of all other soul-saving ordinances of Gods Worship, unto the enjoying whereof, circumcision gave a right and entrance, *Exod. 12. 44.* Secondly, This their miserable estate was matter also of their reproach; the Jews making their want of Circumcision a continuall upcast unto them, which he hinteth at, by shewing that the carnall Jews, who were only circumcised in the flesh by the hands of men, but not in their hearts by the Spirit of God, did not cease to reproach the converted Christian Gentiles with uncircumcision, even at that present time, when circumcision and the rest of those Leviticall ordinances were now abrogated. *Doct. 1.* Even Believers having attained to the sense of Gods mercy in Christ, are very prone to forget that

that wo and misery, which they were under, before their delivery from it: for, the watchword here given to those Ephesians, supposeth so much; *Wherefore remember*, saith he. 2. Those who are converted, ought frequently to remember, and call to mind their sin and misery, under which they were before God shew them mercy, though not to take pleasure in the remembrance of it, *Ezek.* 23. 19. 21. nor to despair of, or question Gods mercy in order to their delivery from it: *Isa.* 1. 18. yet, that hereby they may be provoked to pity towards others, who are yet in that state, *Tit.* 3. 2, 3. to greater fruitfulness in good works for the time to come, *Rom.* 6. 19. and to magnifie the riches of Gods mercy in their delivery from that wofull state, *1 Tim.* 1. 13. 14: and that they may be kept humble under their present enjoyments, *Ezek.* 20. 43. for, therefore doth the Apostle exhort those Ephesians to remember their former sin and misery; *Wherefore remember*, saith he, *that in times past ye were.* 3. Christians, in order to the more effectual bringing about of the forementioned ends, ought not only remember that sin and misery, which was common unto them with others, but also, and chiefly would search out, and call to mind wherein their sin and misery did exceed the sin and misery of others: for, *Paul* biddeth them here remember that misery, which in a great part was peculiar unto themselves as Gentiles, and which they had more than the Jews; *Wherefore remember*, *that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh.* 4. The consideration of Gods rich grace through Jesus Christ, whereby alone He carrieth on the salvation of lost sinners in all its steps, may be a great encouragement, and a strong argument to inforce this duty of searching out and calling to mind our matchlesse sin and misery: and that because this rich grace hath not only a remedy for all our sin and misery in it, *Rom.* 5. 20. but also it is most perceived and felt in its sweet and lively effects, when the soul is most affected with the sense of its own vilenesse, *Luk.* 15. 21, 22. for, the Apostle, having spoken
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of Gods rich grace, whereby we are saved through faith in Christ, he inferreth as a conclusion thence, *Wherefore remember that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh.*

5. Though it is now under the New Testament no more, but much lesse miserable to be born a Gentile, than to be born a Jew, *Rom. 11. 20.* Yet, to have been born a Gentile, and not of *Ahrabams* race, was once, to wit, before Christ came in the flesh, a sad and miserable lot: for, when he is calling to mind their former misery, he biddeth them *remember that they were in time past Gentiles.* 6. Those, who are born without the bounds of the Church, and live not under the drop of divine Ordinances, are in a poor and wofull case, as being not only under wrath, and destitute of any actual interest in the blessing (which piece of misery is common to them with all the unregenerate, whether within or without the visible Church. See ver. -2.) but destitute also of all those means, whereby the blessing useth to be conveyed, *Rom. 10. 14, 15:* so that their salvation is not in an ordinary way possible: for, while he is calling to mind their former misery, he biddeth them *remember they were Gentiles in the flesh*, that is, destitute of Circumcision the leading ordinance, and consequently destitute of all Ordinances, having no part nor communion with Gods Church neither outwardly, nor spiritually, as he explaineth himself, ver. 12. 7. As the contemning, even of outward Ordinances, is no small sin before God, *1 Sam. 2. 17.* with 24. So it is matter of just shame and reproach before men, which did hold especially in the contempt of Circumcision under the Old Testament; it being then a seal of the Covenant, *Gen. 17. 10.* the outward badge of the Lords people. *Gen. 17. 14.* and a leading Ordinance, giving right and entrance to the enjoyment of all other Ordinances, *Exod. 12. 44.* and it doth no lesse hold in Baptism under the New Testament, seeing the Sacraments of the New Testament are of as much worth, as the Sacraments of the Old; and Baptism serveth for the

same ends now, which are presently mentioned to have been the uses, for which Circumcision did serve then : for, although *Paul* doth only mention expressly, that uncircumcision was unjustly cast up to the Christian Gentiles by the carnall and hypocriticall Jews in the present time wherein he wrote, yet hereby he would have them to remember how this was matter of just reproach and upcast unto them, even from the godly Jews in former times, when Circumcision stood in force, and that this disgrace and reproach, was a part of their former misery, (See *1 Sam. 17. 26, 36.*) *who are called uncircumcision, &c.* 8. There are two things in every Sacrament, to wit, an outward action upon the outward man by the outward instrument, and an inward action upon the inward man by the hand and Spirit of God ; for, so was it in Circumcision, the outward action being here expressed by *Circumcision in the flesh made with hands*, which implieth there was another inward action, spoken of *Col. 2. 11.* 9. There are not a few within the visible Church, who rest upon the outward action done by man in the Sacrament, as if that alone were sufficient, and do not seek after that which God doth inwardly work upon the heart : And so do use Sacraments as forcerers do their charms and spels, where the bare rehearsing of some set form of words, with such a composed strain of outward carriage and gesture, is relied upon for the producing of wonderfull effects : for, of this sort were those who are here called *the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands*, that is, such who rested upon the outward action, and sought after no more but it. 10. They have very frequently least of Religion in reality and effect, who are most puffed up with the conceit of their own Religion, and make greatest noise about things least necessary in Religion, or which are in themselves indifferent, as if the greatest stresse of Religion did ly in those : for, those, who boasted themselves of their Religion and Circumcision against the uncircumcised Gentiles, and did place their whole Religion

ligion in Circumcision, and the rest of those mosaicall Ordinances now abolished, were *the Circumcision in the flesh made with hands*, that is, such as had only the outward form of Religion, but not the life and power of it. 11. As it is a great reproach to be despisers of Ordinances; So it is but a poor credit for people to have Ordinances, if they rest upon the outside of them, not labouring to have life and power conveyed from God through them: for, Ordinances, so rested upon, as they will increase peoples judgement afterwards, *Mat. 11. 22.* So they prove a fearfull snare in the mean time, in so far as they are usually relied upon for salvation, *Philip. 3. 7-* and occasion is taken from them to neglect all other duty both to God and man, *Jer. 7. 10.* for, Paul doth here speak of it as a thing disgracefull; *who are called*, saith he, *Circumcision in the flesh made with hands.*

Verf. 12. *That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.*

THe Apostle, thirdly, doth here branch forth their misery at that time when they were unconverted Gentiles, in five particulars. First, They were *without Christ*, as being not only without all saving and real interest in Christ, which was common to them with all the unregenerate, whether without, or within the visible Church, *Gal. 5. 2.* but also without an offer of Christ in the Ministry of the Gospel, as they were Gentiles, without the bounds of the visible Church, *Psal. 147. 20.* Secondly, They were *aliens from the common-wealth of Israel*, having no union or communion, neither with the invisible Church of true Believers, which was common to them with all the unregenerate, *Rom. 2. 28.* nor yet with the visible Church of Professors, which was in those times among the people of *Israel*, *Deut. 32. 8.* And this latter alienation was peculiar

to them, as they were unchurched Gentiles, *Psal.* 76. 1. Thirdly, They were *strangers to the covenants of promise*, that is, the Covenant of Grace made with Adam after the fall (*Gen.* 3. 15.) and afterwards frequently renewed with Abraham, *Gen.* 17. 7. Isaac, *Gen.* 26. 3. Jacob *Gen.* 28. 13, 14. with Israel upon mount Sinai, *Exod.* 24. 7. and in the plains of Moab, *Deut.* 29. 1. &c. and with David, *2 Sam.* 23. 5. And therefore it is called *Covenants* in the plurall number, though it was alwayes one and the same Covenant in substance; the substantiall sum thereof being alwayes comprised in that one comprehensive and fountain-promise, *Gen.* 3. 15. or *Gen.* 12. 3. which seemeth to be here pointed-at by the word *promise* in the singular number; of which promise, all the following promises, made to Abraham, David and the rest, were but branches, or more full explanations. Now, they are said to have been strangers to this Covenant, not only, because they had no actuall interest in the saving blessings of remission of sins, grace here, and glory hereafter, which were promised in that Covenant, *Gal.* 3. 8. (and this was common to them, with all the unregenerate, *Psal.* 50. 16, 17.) But also they had not so much as this Covenant revealed unto them, neither that it was, nor of what kind, or upon what conditions it was; neither had they an offer of it by the publick Ministry of the Word, and so were not within the very outward bond of it, neither had any right to the externall priviledges of this Covenant, *Deut.* 4. 7, 8. which estrangement was peculiar unto them, as they were unchurched Gentiles, *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12. Fourthly, They were *without hope*, not only without that saving grace of hope, which floweth from faith laying hold upon the Covenant of promise, *Rom.* 15. 13. and sustaineth the heart in the patient and well-grounded expectation of the thing promised and believed, *1 Thess.* 5. 8. and this was also common to them with all the unregenerate, *Job* 8. 13, 14. But also, they were in a condition so hopelesse, that their
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salvation was not in an ordinary way possible, as being wholly destituted of those means, whereby God doth ordinarily convert and save sinners, *Psal.* 147. 20. and this was peculiar unto them as they were unchurched Gentiles, *Rom.* 9. 4. Fifthly, They were without God, or atheists, not as if they had been deprived of all sense of a Deity, (for they worshipped false gods, *Acts* 14. 12, 13.) nor yet, as if they had been without the reach and care of Gods over-ruling and all-upholding providence, *Acts* 17. 28. but they were without the knowledge of the true God, *Gal.* 4. 8. or, though they had some confused knowledge, even of the true God, *Rom.* 1. 19, yet He was not their reconciled God in Christ, *Col.* 1. 21. neither did they give Him that worship and glory, which is due unto God, and was prescribed by Him in His Word, *Rom.* 1. 21, 22. And lastly, He addeth, that they were without God in the world: which words, in the world, may be looked upon, as a generall clause relating to all the particular branches of their misery before mentioned. And he seemeth hereby to condescend, what that bypast time was, wherein all that he hath spoken was verified in them, to wit, when they were in the world, that is, without the Church, as the world is frequently taken in opposition to Gods Church, *Job.* 15. 19. and 17. 14. and especially to the truly regenerate in the Church, 1 *Job.* 5. - 19. *Doct.* 1. As those who are converted, would frequently call to mind that sin and misery under which they were when God did call them (See *vers.* 11. *Doct.* 2.) so because an abstract view of sin and misery in the general, doth not much affect the heart, therefore they ought to branch forth and call to mind their misery in its severall heads and parcels, that so they may be the more affected with it: for, the Apostle, having exhorted them to remember their former misery, he doth not only give them a general view of it, *ver.* 11. but here doth branch it forth in five particulars, which they were to remember; That at that time ye were without Christ, &c. 2. For a

man to be without an offer of Christ, yea to be without a reall interest in Christ, though there be never so frequent offers of Him, is a dolefull, sad and dangerous case; for, to want a reall and saving interest in Christ, is to want life, (1 *Joh.* 5. 12.) light, (*Joh.* 1. 4, 5.) strength, (*Joh.* 15. - 5.) liberty, (*Joh.* 8. 36.) and acceptation with God, *Mat.* 3. 17: And to have a saving interest in Christ, doth make a man truly happy, what ever be his misery otherwise: for, he maketh this the first branch of their misery, and that which virtually compriseth all the rest, even that *at that time they were without Christ.* 3. Though Christ from all eternity had a right unto, and interest in the Elest, they being given over unto Him in the Covenant of Redemption, *Joh.* 6. 39. yet they never have, nor can plead any interest in Him, or in those saving benefits, which were purchased by Him, untill they be effectually called, and do actually believe in Him; for, though God from all eternity had chosen in Christ those who were truly Godly among the Ephesians, cap. 1. 4. yet untill their effectuall calling, they were without Christ, as *without Christ* did speak their not having an actuall interest in Him; *That at that time ye were without Christ.* 4. Though Jesus Christ was not so clearly manifested unto the Jewish Church, as He now is under the Gospel, 2 *Cor.* 3. 14. yet, they were not then altogether without Christ, they had Him revealed unto them, though but darkly in the Word, *Gen.* 12. 3. and in their daily sacrifices, which were types and shadows of Him, *Col.* 2. 17. yea, and the Godly then had reall interest by faith in Him, *Joh.* 8. 56. and in those saving benefits, which then were to be, and now are actually purchased by Him, *Rom.* 3. 25. for, the Gentiles are here said, in opposition to the Jews, to have been *at that time without Christ*; whereby it is implied, that the Jewish Church was not without Him. 5. It is no small happinesse for men and women to have union and communion with the Church of Christ; It is even an happinesse in its own

own kind, and comparatively to be members of His visible Church; for, thereby we partake of all the priviledges thereof, which are Gods speciall care and government, *Isa.* 4. 5. 6. protection, and preservation in all ages, notwithstanding the opposition of all enemies, *Isa.* 31. 4. 5. the enjoyment of the ordinary means of salvation, *Psal.* 147. 19. and the externall communion of the Saints by partaking of the same ordinances, *1 Cor.* 10. 17. and the mutuall gifts one of another, *1 Thess.* 5. 11. together with the offers of Christ and salvation upon such terms as they are proponed in the Gospel, *Act.* 13. 38. But it is much more happinesse to be members of the invisible Church of Believers; for thereby we do partake of all the saving benefits and special priviledges thereof: which are union with Christ, as her head and Husband, *Eph.* 5. 23. 30. communion with Him in all the saving fruits of His Redemption, relating either to grace here, or glory hereafter, chap. 1. 3. together with that communion, which Believers have among themselves, in their mutuall partaking of the gifts and graces one of another, *1 Cor.* 12. 25, 26. And to be deprived of all union and communion with Christs Church, is a wofull, sad, and miserable case: for, *Paul* maketh this the second branch of their misery, that they were *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.* 6. So strait and nigh is that union betwixt Christ and His Church, that separation from, or union with the one, inferreth separation from, or union with the other: and in the same respect and degree, wherein men are separated from, or united with Christ, they are in some answerable respect and degree separated from, or united with His Church: for, the Apostle conjoyneth these two, as of equall extent; *Ye were without Christ, as being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.* 7. As the Lord hath been graciously pleased to transact with man about that obedience, which he oweth unto God, as his sovereign Lord and Creator, in the way of Covenant, or mutuall pactiō and agreement; wherein, for his better encour-

agement to discharge the duty required of him, the Lord doth assure him of a rich reward, *Job. 3. 16.* So, the Covenant which God hath entered with fallen man, is a Covenant of promise, wherein the thing promised is freely given, and not for any worth in him to whom it is given: for, as his affirming that the Gentiles were strangers to the Covenants of promise, implyeth that the Church was no stranger to the Covenant, but that God did deal with them by way of Covenant; so the word *promise* in the Originall, signifieth a free promise, where the thing promised is freely bestowed; *And strangers from the Covenants of promise.* 8. For men to live and die without an offer of the Covenant of grace made unto them to be entered by them, is a wofull, sad, and dangerous case; for hereby they are not only deprived of all the priviledges of the visible Church, mentioned, *Doct. 5.* to which the tender of this gracious Covenant unto a people, and their professed subjection to it, doth give right, (the Covenant being the Churches Chartor, whereby she holdeth all these priviledges, *Act. 2. 38.* with 39.) but their salvation in that case is also rendered in an ordinary way impossible, there being not so much as an offer of it, nor a making known unto them the terms and conditions whereupon salvation may be had: yea, and further, to be without an actuall interest and right to the saving blessings of that gracious Covenant, arising from the grace of saving faith, laying hold upon those blessings, and the offer of them in the Covenant, is a case in some respects no lesse lamentable, sad, and dangerous (which is the case of all who are unregenerate, even though they be members of the visible Church, and so within the outward bond of the Covenant, and do enjoy the common blessings thereof, (*Rom. 9. 4. Matth. 20. -16.*) for, such are not only destitute of an claim and title to any of those spirituall blessings, which are offered in the rich and precious promises of this Covenant, *Jer. 31. 33, 34.* and *32. 39, 40.* but also shall have no advocate to plead for them, *Matth. 7. 23.* are bound

bound to fulfill the whole Law, else they can never be saved, *Gal. 5. 3.* and have no strength allowed upon them for the fulfilling of it but their own, (for they are without Christ) must stand and fall at Gods tribunall, according to that dreadfull and terrible sentence of the Covenant of works, *Gal. 3. 10.* yea, it shall go worse with them in the great day, than with those who never heard the Gospel, *Matth. 11. 22.* So that the case of such is most miserable: for, the Apostle maketh this the third branch of their misery, even that *they were strangers from the Covenants of promise*, without all title or interest either to the outward priviledges, or saving blessings of that Covenant. 9. As those, who are without the offer of Christ in the Gospel, without the bounds of the visible Church, and the external bond of the Covenant of grace, are in a case altogether hopelesse; their salvation being in an ordinary way altogether impossible: So all unregenerate men, even those who are within the Church, and have no real interest in Christ, or the saving benefits of the Covenant of grace, by the grace of faith, and have no union or communion with the invisible Church of sound Believers, all such are destituted of the true and saving grace of hope for heaven and salvation, and those other good things promised in the Word, even that hope which is grounded upon the Word, (*Psal. 119. 49.*) and the mercies of God, (*Psal. 147. 11.*) and not upon our own performances, *Matth. 7. 22.* and beareth up the heart under all discouragements, *Psal. 119. 81.* yea, and setteth the man who hath it upon the task of purifying his own heart, *1 Job. 3. -3.* All unregenerate men are destituted of this hope, whatever false hopes, blind confidence, and daring presumption they may entertain in their hearts, *Deut 29. 19.* for, the Apostle, having affirmed of those Ephesians, that at that time they were without Christ, &c. he addeth they were also *without hope*, that is, their salvation was in an ordinary way hopelesse, to wit, as they were without the offer of Christ, and the Doctrine of
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the Covenant, and they were destitute of the grace of hope, as being without actuall interest in Christ by faith, &c. and unregenerate; *having no hope.* 10. To be wholly destitute of this true and saving grace of hope, is a most wofull, dangerous, and lamentable case: for hereby men do live in continuall hazard of spirituall shipwrack, being destitute of the anchor of their soul, *Heb. 6. 19.* hereby they are exposed to deadly blows from sin, Satan and worldly discouragements, being destitute of their helmet, *Eph. 6. 17.* hereby they want a necessary spur and incitement to diligence in duties, 1 *Job. 3. 3.* yea, and hereby they cannot choose but die either in stupid senselesse, *Job 21. 13.* or in desperate diffidence, *Gen. 4. 13.* for, he maketh this the fourth branch of their misery, that they had no hope, which includeth mainly their wanting the grace of hope; *having no hope*, saith he. 11. There is no knowledge of God, as we ought, or enjoying of Him, except we know Him in Christ, and come to Him by Christ: for, the Apostle maketh their being without Christ, and their being without God, to go together; *And without God in the world*, saith he. 12. As not only profane avowed Atheists are without God, but those also, who do not know the true God, and give not to Him that trust, love, fear and joy, above what they give unto any other thing else, and who do not labour to have Him made their own God; So to be thus without God, is a wofull, sad, and lamentable case, even the headstone of all that misery which any creature can be under: for hereby God remaineth their enemy, *Col. 1. 21.* All the creatures are against them, *Hos. 2. 18.* and they themselves are under the drop of Gods eternall wrath and vengeance: (See, ver. -2.) for, the Apostle affirmeth here of those Ephesians, that before their conversion they were without God, though even then they had some knowledge of the true God, *Rom. 1. 19.* and he mentioneth this in the last place, as the sum and headstone of all their misery, even *that they were without God in the world.*

Vers.

Verf. 12. *But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*

HERE beginneth the second branch of the second part of the Chapter, wherein is set forth the present happy estate of those Ephesians, together with the way how, and by whom this happy lot was purchased for them. And, first, he briefly propoundeth that blessed change which had befallen them, in so far as they, who were before *afar off*, to wit, from Christ, His Church, His Covenant, saving hope, and from God Himself, not through local distance, *Act. 17. -27.* but through want of saving interest, union and communion with God, with Christ and His Church by faith, hope, love, or professed subjection to Gods Law and Ordinances, as was explained, ver. 12. they, even they, were *now made nigh* to God, to Christ and His Church in the same sense. And withall he briefly sheweth, not only the way how all things requisite to that blessed change were purchased for them, to wit, by the merit of Christ's death upon the Crosse, which was the accomplishment of all His other sufferings and obedience, *Job. 19. 30.* but also, how those things so purchased, were actually bestowed upon them, and applyed unto them, to wit, by their being in Christ, and by vertue of their union with Him.

Now as their distance, and severall piecēs of their former misery did belong unto them in two respects; First, as they were without the visible Church; Secondly, as they were men unregenerate, in which respect, their misery was common to them with all the unregenerate, whether without, or within the Church, as was cleared, ver. 12. So what is here, and in the verses following spoken of their delivery, and present happy state, is in many things, at least applicable, not only to their inward state, as being a great many of them truly regenerate, justified and sanctified, and therefore mem-
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bers of the invisible Church of Believers ; but also by proportion to their outward state , as being members of Christs visible Church , whereby they enjoyed many rich privileges , (See ver. 12. *Doct.* 5.) And those also purchased by Christ, *Eph.* 4. 8. 11. and conveyed to the visible Church , and every Church-member by reason of their visible and political union with him. *Joh.* 15. 2. neither is Scripture hereby rendred ambiguous or doubtfull, as signifying two diverse things ; for, whether we look to the privileges of true Believers, or of visible Church-members (the privileges of the latter being the enjoyment of those blessings in the offer of the Gospel, and a living under such means and ordinances by which God useth to convey those blessings, the actual possessing of which, or present right unto which, are the privileges of reall Believers) or if we look to that which giveth them a right, each one to their respective privileges, to wit, the grace of faith, and a mysticall and saving union with Christ upon the part of real Believers, and a profession of the doctrine of faith, either personally or parentally, and an external and political union with Christ upon the part of visible Church-members. I say, which of those be looked unto, we will find so much of likenesse and proportion betwixt what belongeth to the visible Church, and what belongeth to the invisible, that both may safely and without ambiguity be taken up as intended by the Spirit of God to be expressed in one and the same Scripture ; though the one more principally, and the other secondarily, and as it were by proportion. As for example here, seeing the nighnesse and happinesse, which visible Church-members enjoy, is only comparative, and with respect had to the greater misery of those who are wholly without the Church ; and that it is but a misery and distance , being compared with that state of nighnesse and happinesse which the truly Regenerate are brought unto ; Therefore I conceive, that what is mentioned of the delivery and blessed state, here spoken of, was

was verified mainly and fully in the Regenerate and invisible Church of Believers among them, and but proportionally only and in part in the visible Church of professors: and therefore I shall only collect such doctrines as arise from it, being so considered.

Hence *Learn*, 1. The more nigh the consideration of our miserable and happy state be set together in opposition the one to the other before the eye of the soul, it commendeth and sweetneth our happy state through grace the more: for, the Apostle's scope being to set forth the happiness of that state, wherein free grace had placed them, he compriseth all their misery in one word, *They were sometimes far off*, and all their happiness in another, *they were now made nigh*; And so giveth a joynt view of them both at once. 2. The People of God are not so to remember bypast sin and misery, as to make them question the fruits of Gods mercy already received, or to despair of receiving more in time to come: for, having exhorted them (ver. 11.) to remember their former misery, in the first place, he exhorteth them here to remember that happy estate wherein mercy had placed them in the next; *But now——ye are made nigh*. 3. As it is the duty of Converts frequently to remember their former sin and misery: (See Vers. 11. Doct. 2.) So also to call to minde, and confidently avow that gracious change which free-grace hath wrought upon them in their conversion; because as misbelief is ready to call it in question, *Isa. 50. 10*. So the remembrance and avowing of it, is most profitable, in order to our own comfort against the sense of bypast or present sin and misery, *1 Cor. 6. 11*. in order to our incitement to the duty of walking suitably, chap. 4. 1. and to our encouragement against the fear of all imaginary difficulties, which may occur in our way to heaven and glory, *Philip. 1. 6*. and in order to our thankfulness unto God for His so rich mercy manifested in our delivery, *1 Pet. 2. 9*. for, the Apostle exhorteth them to remember this in the second place, *That*
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ye who were sometimes far off, are now made nigh. 4. As converting grace falleth often upon those who are most gracelesse, and at greatest distance from God, from Christ and His Church; So it bringeth those, upon whom it falleth, into a state of nearnesse to all those, because of these many nigh relations, under which they stand to God; as of servants, *Rom. 6. 22.* of friends, *Col. 1. 21.* and sons, *Joh. 1. 12.* and to Christ, as of His Spouse, *Cant. 4. 8.* members, *Eph. 5. 30.* brethren, &c. *Heb. 2. 11.* And because of these sweet influences for the life and comfort of grace, which they receive daily from Him, as the members from the head, *Col. 2. 19.* because of that near accessse, which they have unto God in Christ, both as to their state and performances; whereof ver. 19. And because of that union, and communion, which they have with the invisible Church of Believers, the congregation of the first-born (See *Verf. 12. Doct. 5.*) for, with relation mainly to this gracious change, which was wrought upon reall Believers among them in their regeneration, he saith, *But now, yee, who sometimes were far off, are made nigh.* 5. As this excellent state of nearnesse to God and His Church, wherein the truly regenerate do stand, and all those excellent privileges which flow from it, were purchased for the Elect by no lesse price than the bloud of Christ, whose bloud was the bloud of God, *Acts 20. -28.* and therefore of infinit value; So none of those are actually bestowed upon, and applied unto the Elect, untill they be united to Christ, and in Him by saving faith, as the branches are in the root, from which they draw sap and nourishment: for, saith he, *in Christ Jesus ye are made nigh by the bloud of Christ*; they were in Christ by faith, before they attained that state of nearnesse, which was purchased by His bloud.

- Verf. 14. *For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us:*
 15. *Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of Commandments, contained in Ordinances—*

THe Apostle being, next, more largely to explain and prove what he hath briefly asserted, that the Gentiles were made nigh to God and His Church by the blood of Christ, doth, first, confirm it by an argument taken from Christ's Priestly office, according to which He is not only the Mediator for peace, and peace-maker betwixt God and man, and among men themselves; but He is also *our peace*, as being the propitiatory sacrifice, and having purchased this peace with His own blood, *Isa.* 53. 5. and so the very cause and reason of this peace, is in Himself, and nothing extrinsicall to Himself. Secondly, he doth prove that Christ was their peace, by the effect produced by Him, and the matter of working this effect. The effect it self, is, that where before the Jews and Gentiles were irrecoverably separated by reason of their different Religion and religious Rites, He had now united them in one and the same Church, which is said to have been then done, because it was in part done: for, the rejecting of *Israel*, is only in part, *Rom.* 11. -25- but the full accomplishment of it shall be when all *Israel*, and the fulnesse of the Gentiles, shall be called, *Rom.* 11. -25, 26- The manner of working this effect, is set down in three phrases, all signifying one thing, though different in regard of diverse considerations. First, *He broke down the middle wall of partition*, whereby, as he explaineth himself in the following verse, is meant the ceremonial Law, and it is called the *middle wall of partition*, or of a hedge and stone-wall (for, the Original signifieth both) with an eye, questionlesse, to the wall, which was in *Solomons Temple* between the court of the People and of the Gentiles, which hindered all manner of passage, sight, or communication betwixt them,

them, *Ezek.* 42. 20. So the meaning is, that in order to this union He did abolish the legall ceremonies, whereby the Jews were distinguished from the Gentiles, as two houses, by a mid-wall going betwixt them, or as an inclosed Garden is separated from an out-field, by an hedge or dyke of rough stones, ver. 14. Secondly, He did *abolish the enmity*: by which, *enmity* is meant the same ceremoniall Law, and that chiefly because it was the occasion of a perpetuall standing strife betwixt Jew and Gentile, while the Jew reproached the Gentile with uncircumcision and neglect of Gods worship, *Act.* 10. 28. the Gentile again reproached the Jew with circumcision, and the rest of these Legall rites, which they judged unreasonable, irreligious and absurd, *Eph.* 3. 8. although those ceremoniall rites may be also called *enmity* with relation to God, in so far as the practising of them by the Jews was a real testimony and confession of their own guilt, and the enmity which was betwixt them and God. See *Collos.* 2. 14. And His withholding them from the Gentiles, was an evidence of His displeasure, and enmity against them, *Psa.* 147. 20. and here the Apostle expresseth the way, how Christ did abolish that enmity, or these ceremoniall rites, to wit, in *His own flesh*, that is, by His death, which He suffered in His flesh, or humane nature, *1 Pet.* 3. 18. Thirdly, he expoundeth what he meant by the *mid-wall* and the *enmity*, which Christ abolished, even *the Law of Commandments in ordinances*. The first of which words, is more general, to wit, *the Law*, as comprehending, according to the custom of the Hebrew language, all Doctrine revealed to the Church, *Psal.* 19. 7. and this is restricted by the second word, which is more speciall, to wit, *Commandments*, signifying that Doctrine only, which commandeth what should be done, and forbiddeth what should not be done; and both those are restricted by the third, which is yet more special, to wit, *Ordinances*, whereby are meant those Commandments only, which did relate to Gods externall

nall worship, and were prescribed by God, as so many types and shadows of Christ to come, and of those good things which were purchased by Him, *Heb. 9. 9, 10.* So that the Law and Commandments were only abolished, as to that part of them which was contained in those Ordinances, *ver. 15.*

From *ver. 14.* *Learn, 1.* Every man by nature in himself, and without Christ, is at war and enmity with God, with His Church, and chiefly those in the Church who are truly regenerate: he cannot be subject unto the Law of God, *Rom. 8. 7.* And, as therefore he hateth the Law-giver, and those who yeeld obedience to His Laws; So he is under the Law-givers curse, *Gal. 3. 10.* for, while the Apostle speaketh of making those Ephesians nigh to God and His Church by Christ, he saith, *Christ was their peace*: which implyeth that their distance from those consisted in hatred of, and enmity against them; *for he is our peace*, saith he. *2.* This enmity chiefly, which is between God and fallen man, was irreconcilable, and impossible to be removed, except Jesus Christ that great high Priest and Prince of Peace had shed His blood and suffered death, by the merit whereof, as He hath given satisfaction to a provoked God, *Eph. 5. 2.* So by the efficacy and vertue thereof He subdueth that rebellious disposition against God, which naturally is in us, *Rom. 6. 6.* and maketh us accept the offer of friendship and reconciliation with God, and yeeld our selves servants to righteousness unto holinesse, *Acts 5. 31.* and so upon both hands He maketh peace: for, saith he, *He is our peace*, to wit, *by His blood*, spoken of in the preceeding verse. *3.* The uniting of both Jew and Gentile in one Church, is a branch of that peace which Christ hath purchased with His blood: And that not only, because their actual union was, according as God in His wise counsel had decreed, to follow upon Christs death, and not to go before it (*See upon Gal. 3. vers. 14. Doct. 4.*) but also in order to this union, the Law of ceremonies behoved

to be abolished, See *Dock. 5.* and this called for Christs death; See *vers. 15. Dock. 4.* for, the Apostle having asserted that Christ was their peace by His blood, he giveth this as an instance, or effect of His so being, *Who hath made both one.* 4. From the Apostles designing the ceremoniall Law by a metaphor taken from houses divided by a mid-wall, or from an orchard, garden or inclosure, separated from the out-field, by a dyke or wall of rough stones, We learn, several things relating to the nature, use and duration of the ceremoniall Law, which are the grounds of the similitude. And, first, as a wall is builded by the owner of the inclosure, So the ceremoniall Law was of Gods own appointment, who only had power to choosẽ what part of the world He thought fit, to be an inclosure for Himself, *Deut. 32. 8.* and to appoint these means and ordinances, whereby He would have them inclosed and separated from others, *Exod. 25. 40.* Secondly, as a rough wall is made up of so many hard unpolished stones, not covered over with lime or plaister; So the ceremoniall Law consisted of many Ordinances, *Heb. 9. 10.* and those very difficult to be obeyed, and an intolerable yoke, *Act. 15. 10.* Thirdly, as a wall or hedge incloseth a peece of ground for the owners special use, (which therefore is more painfully manured) and separateth that inclosure from the out-field which lyeth about it; So the ceremoniall Law did serve to inclose the people of Israel, as the Lords own garden and vineyard, for bringing forth fruit unto Himself, *Isa. 5. 7.* and to separate them from all the world besides, *Deut. 4. 7, 8.* as being a worship wholly different from, and contrary unto the superstitious rites and worship used among the Gentiles, *Deut. 12. 2.* and containing strict injunctions unto the Jews to avoid all conformity with the Gentiles in their garments, *Num. 15. 38.* cutting of their hair, *Lev. 19. 27.* and such like. Fourthly, as a rough wall is but weak and ruinous, as not being built with cement or mortar, to make it strong, and therefore but to endure

endure for a season, untill the owner think fit to enlarge his inclosure, and take-in more of the open field; So the ceremoniall Law was not to last for ever, but only for a time, untill Christ should come in the flesh, and take in the Gentiles within the inclosure of His Church, who were before an open field, not possessed, nor manured by Him, after which there was no further use of the mid-wall; *And hath broken down the mid-wall of partition between us*, saith he, meaning the ceremoniall Law. *Doct.* 5. So long as the ceremoniall Law did stand in force and vigour, the Jews and Gentiles could not be united into one Church: for, seeing by that Law the chief parts of Gods worship were astricted to the Temple at Jerusalem, therefore, though scattered profelytes of the neighbouring Nations did joyn themselves to the Church of the Jews, and in some measure observed the way of Worship then enjoyned, *Act.* 8. 27. yet there was a physicall impossibility for the generality of many Nations far remote from Jerusalem, to have served God according to the prescript of Worship, which then was: besides, there was such an habituate, and, as it were, an naturall antipathy transmitted from one generation unto another among the Gentiles against the ceremoniall worship; that there was little lesse than a morall impossibility of bringing up the body of the Gentiles unto a cordiall joyning with the Jews in it: for, the Apostle sheweth the ceremoniall Law behoved to be abrogated, in order to an union betwixt these two, while he saith, *Who hath made both one, and broken down the middle-wall of partition between us.* 6. Whoever would make peace betwixt God and himself, or betwixt himself and others, he ought seriously to think upon those things which stand in the way of peace, and set about the removall of them, if it be in his power, and chiefly those evils in himself, of pride, vain-glory, self-seeking, and a contentious disposition, which are great obstructions in the way of peace, *Phil.* 2. 3, 4. else, what ever be his pretences for peace, he is

no real follower of it: for, Christ, intending to make peace betwixt Jew and Gentile, did take away whatever might have impeded it; *He even broke down the middle wall of partition between them.*

From ver. 15- *Learn, 1.* As Gods people in covenant with Him, ought to be highly incensed against, and averse from any voluntary intire fellowship with those who neglect and contemn the Ordinances of Worship prescribed by God in His Word; So those who are without the Church, yea and all unregenerate men do look upon the ordinances of Gods Worship, as base, ridiculous and contemptible, and carry a kind of hatred and disdain to all such as make conscience of them: for, so the ancient Worship, prescribed in the ceremoniall Law, was the occasion of hatred and enmity betwixt the Gentile, who contemned it, and the Jew, who made conscience of it. And therefore is here called the *enmity*; *having abolished the enmity.* 2. As the morall Law contained in the Ten Commandments, was no part of that mid-wall of partition between Jew and Gentile; seeing some of the draughts and lineaments of that Law are upon the hearts of all by nature. *Rom. 2. 15.* So there was no necessity to abrogate this Law at Christs death in order to the uniting of Jew and Gentile; neither was it at all abolished: for, the Law abolished, was *the Law*, not simply, but *the Law of Commandments*, and these not all, but such Commandments as were contained in *Ordinances*, to wit, the ceremoniall Law, as we shew in the Exposition; *Even the Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances*, saith he. 3. As God only hath power and liberty to prescribe what manner of Worship He will be served by; So He did once give a most observable evidence of this His power and liberty, by changing that externall way of worship, which was prescribed by Himself under the Old Testament, unto another under the New, although the internals of His Worship, to wit, the graces of faith, love, hope, joy in God, do remain the same in both;

Matth.

Matth. 22. 37, 39. for, He did abolish the Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances, even all the ancient Worship consisting in rites and ceremonies, sensible and fleshly observations, which God did then prescribe, not as simply delighted in them, but as accomodating Himself to the childish condition of the Church in those times, and hath now appointed a more spirituall way of Worship, as more suitable to the grown age of the Church, Job. 4. 21. 23. See further the reasons why the ceremoniall Law was abolished, and concerning that state of indifferency, wherein the practice of it was left for a time, upon Gal. 2. ver. 3. Doct. 2. and ver. 4. Doct. 1. 4. It was Christs sufferings and death, which put an end to the Law of ceremonies, and made the binding power thereof to cease: for, seeing His sufferings were the body and substance of all those shadows, they neither did nor could evanish untill Christ had suffered, but then they did; it being impossible that a shadow, and the body, whereof it is a shadow, can consist in one and the same place; Having abolished in His flesh the Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances.

Verf. - 15. For to make in himself, of twain, one new man, so making peace.

16. And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the crosse, having slain the enmity thereby.

THE Apostle, thirdly, for further clearing of what he spoke, ver. 13. that the Gentiles were made nigh to God and His Church in the bloud of Christ, holdeth forth two ends, which Christ proposed to be brought about in His abolishing the ceremoniall Law. First, that He might by a manner of new creation make of those two Nations, of Jew and Gentile, being firmly united to Himself as to their head, one people and Church, here called *one new man*, to shew the intimacy of that union, as also the way how they were united, not by bringing any one of them to the fashions and

customs of the other; for, so they should have been made *one old man*, but by bringing both off that way of worship whereon they were: the Gentile, both from the substance and external manner of their worship, as having been wholly idolatrous, *Gal. 4. 8.* The Jew, only from the external manner of their worship, consisting in fleshly and sensible rites and observations, whereby He made them one new Church, with new Ordinances of divine worship, even such as the Church now enjoyeth under the Gospel: and so he concludeth the vers. by shewing that Christ did hereby accomplish what he had spoken of Him, ver. 13, and 14-. Even that He had made peace betwixt the two Nations, and consequently the Gentiles nigh to the Church by His own blood: this is ver. -15. The second end why Christ did abolish the ceremonial Law, was, that He might reconcile both Jew and Gentile, being so united among themselves in one body, unto a provoked God; which He did by the sacrifice of His own soul and body upon the crosse, by the means whereof he did destroy that enmity which was betwixt God and man, aswell the sin of the Elect both in its guilt (*Rom. 8. 1.*) and power, *Rom. 6. 6.* which was the ground and cause of that enmity, *Isa. 59. 2.* as the ceremoniall Law, which was an evidence of it. See upon ver. 15-. This is the sum of ver. 16.

From Vers. -15. *Learn, 1.* Union in the Church of Christ is a thing which ought to be prized by us highly, and sought after earnestly; and so much, as there is nothing in our power which we ought not to bestow upon it, and dispense with for the acquiring and maintaining of it: for, so much was it prized by Christ, that He gave his own life to procure it, and did beat down all His own Ordinances which stood in the way of it; *He even abolished in His flesh the Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances, for to make, of twain, one new man.* 2. There are no divisions more hardly curable, than those which are about the Religion and Worship of God,

God, in so far as they engage, not only the credit, but also the consciences of the divided parties: hence one party, so engaged, doth pursue what they maintain, as that wherein Gods honour and their own salvation are most nearly concerned, and doth look upon the other party, as an adversary. in so far at least, to both of those: for, the Apostle, speaking of Christs uniting the Jew and Gentile in one Church and Religion, maketh use of a word which sheweth this was a task of no small difficulty, even such, that no lesse than creating power was required to it, while he saith, *for to make in Himself*, (the word signifieth *to creat in Himself*) *of twain, one new man.*

3. So strict and near is that conjunction and union which is especially among true believers in the Church, that all of them, how far soever dispersed through the world, do yet make up but one man and one body; as being all, whatever be their other differences, most strictly united, as members unto one head, Christ, *1 Cor. 12. 27.* and animated, as to the inward man, by the same Spirit of God, residing and acting in them, *Rom. 8. 9:* for, the Apostle sheweth, that all of them, whether Jew or Gentile, were made, not only one people, one nation, one family, but one new man; *For to make, of twain, one new man.*

4. As the essentiall unity of the invisible Church, without which the Church could not be a Church, doth of necessity depend upon, and flow from that union, which every particular member hath with Christ, as Head; seeing the grace of love (whereby they are knit one to another, *Col. 3. 14.*) doth flow from faith, *Gal. 5. -6.* whereby they are united to Him, *Eph. 3. 17.* So, the more our union with Christ is improved unto the keeping of constant communion and fellowship with Him, the more will be attained unto of harmonious walking among our selves, suitable unto that essentiall union which is in the Church of Christ: for, the Apostle maketh the conjunction of Jews and Gentiles in one Church, to depend upon Christs uniting of them to himself; *For to make in Himself, of twain, one new man*, saith

he. 5. The peace which ought to be, and which Christ calleth for in His Church, is not a simple cessation from open strife, which may take place, even when there remaineth a root of bitterness in peoples spirits, *Psal. 55. 21.* but it is such an harmonious walking together in all things as sheweth from the nearest conjunction of hearts, and the total removal of all former bitterness of spirits: for, the peace which Christ did make betwixt Jew and Gentile, did follow upon His abolishing the enmity, and making them one man; *so making peace,* saith he.

From *Verf. 16. Learn, 1.* Union and peace with men, even with good men, is to little purpose, except there be peace and friendship with God also: for, the Apostle sheweth, that Christ, in abolishing the ceremonial Law, did design not only the conjunction of the Church among themselves, but their reconciliation with God also, and the former in subordination to the latter; *And that He might reconcile both unto God, in one body.*

2. As all mankind have fallen from that state of friendship with God, wherein they once were before the fall, *Eccles. 7. 29.* So, the repairing of this wofull breach, and making up of friendship betwixt God and the Elect, was Christ's great businesse in the world; for effectuating whereof, whatever He did or suffered, was in some one way or other subservient: for, the Apostle sheweth He suffered in the flesh, abolished the ceremonial Law, united the two Nations, *that He might reconcile both unto God in one body.* The word rendred *reconcile*, signifieth the making up of old friendship. 3. Though the believing Jews under the Old Testament, were reconciled unto God, even while the ceremonial Law stood in force, *Psal. 32. 4.* Yet the price, by vertue whereof they were reconciled, could not be actually payed, to wit, Christ's death and sufferings, except the ceremonial Law had presently evanished, (See *Ver. 15- Doct. 4.*) neither could Jew and Gentile be united together in one body, and so reconciled to God, while that Law was in force and binding. See *Verf. 14. Doct. 5.* Therefore, and in those

those respects, it was necessary for Christ to abolish the ceremonial Law, that He might reconcile both Jew and Gentile unto God : for, so saith Paul, *He abolished the Law of Commandments in Ordinances--that He might reconcile both unto God in one body.* 4. There can be no reconciliation betwixt God and us, except we be united by faith to Christ, and to the body of all Believers in Him; So that none can be one with God who are not of the mysticall body of His Church : yea, and in so far will the sense and sweet effects of reconciliation with God be interrupted and obstructed, as persons reconciled do give way unto divisions, rents and strifes among themselves : for, the Gentiles and Jews, being in one body with Christ and His Church, come to be reconciled unto God ; *That He might reconcile both unto God, in one body*, that is, being united among themselves in one body under Christ the head, as is affirmed, vers. 15. 5. As Jesus Christ did interpose as mediator and peacemaker to reconcile God and us ; So He behaved, in order unto this end, to bear the chastisement of our peace, and to lay down His life by a shamefull, painfull and cursed death ; that so, the justice of God being fully satisfied for our wrong, we might enjoy God's peace and favour with life : for, he sheweth the mean of their reconciliation, was the crosse of Christ, not the material tree or matter of the crosse, but Christ's sufferings and death upon the crosse ; *That He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the crosse.* 6. Christ in suffering Himself to be overcome by death, did fully destroy sin, death, the ceremonial Law, and every other thing which could impede the reconciliation of the Elect with God, He, having thereby brought-in the substance of all those legal shadows, *Col. 3. 17.* satisfied the justice of God, and purchased grace and strength, which afterwards He was to convey unto all Believers for mortifying and subduing the body of sin and death in them, *Act. 5. 31.* for saith Paul, *He hath slain the enmity thereby*, that is, by the crosse, and His death upon the crosse ; So that by being slain, He slew the enmity betwixt God and us. Vers.

Verf. 17. *And came, and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.*

IN this and the following verse, is contained the third branch of the second part of the Chapter, wherein the Apostle sheweth how that excellent benefit of union and communion with God in His Church, purchased by Christ for the Gentiles, was published, and actually communicated unto them equally with the Jews, to wit, by the preaching of the Gospel. And first, he declareth that Christ Himself did preach and publish the glad tidings of that peace and reconciliation which was purchased by Him on the crosse. See ver. 15, 16. And, secondly, he sheweth to whom he did publish it, first, to the Gentiles who were far off, (See *Act. 2. 39*) being compared with the Jews; as being without the bounds of the visible Church. Now, Christ preached to the Gentiles, not immediately and in His own person, *Mat. 15. 24.* except to some few, who were first-fruits of the rest, *Mat. 8. 5, &c.* and *15. 28.* but mediately and by the ministry of His Apostles, and their successors, the Ministers of the Gospel, whom He sent unto them to preach, *Mat. 28. 19.* whose Ministry He doth alwayes accompany by His Spirit, to the conviction of some, and conversion of others; and therefore He himself is said to preach in them, *1 Pet. 3. 19.* Next, to the Jews, who are said here to be nigh, because they were within the visible Church, and therefore (though many of them, being simply considered, were far from God; yet) they were nigh, being compared with the Gentiles, as living under the drop of the means of grace and reconciliation. Now, he mentioneth the Gentiles, first, not as if the Gospel had been first preached unto them, *Act. 13. 46* but to shew that this priviledge of having the Gospel preached, did now under the New Testament belong equally both to the Jews and Gentiles; And therefore it was not of any moment which of them were

were mentioned first, and which last. *Dott. 1.* It is not sufficient, in order to our reconciliation with God, that a price was payed by Christ upon the crosse to satisfie divine justice, but there must also an offer be made of this purchased friendship in the preaching of the Gospel; that so we may imbrace and lay hold upon it by faith; otherwise the friendship is not actually made, *Col. 1. 21.* for, the Apostle, having shewed (*ver. 16.*) that Christ had satisfied divine justice upon the crosse, doth here declare how His so doing was published and actually communicated both to Jew and Gentile; *And came, and preached peace.* 2. Though we did commit the wrong which occasioned the enmity betwixt God and us, *Col. 1. 21.* yet, not only the first motion, but the full prosecution and through compleating of the friendship, cometh from God through Christ, in so far as Christ did not only upon the crosse satisfie for our wrong, but also maketh an offer of friendship so purchased, in the ministry of the Word: yea, and bringeth us to a closing with the terms upon which it is offered, *Job. 6. 44. And came and preached peace.* 3. As the sum of the Gospel is *peace*, there being nothing contained in it but a declaration that peace and reconciliation with God and His Church may be had, and upon what sweet and easie tearms it may be had, *Rom. 5. 11.* and earnest offers of that peace, made unto all who would imbrace it upon those tearms, *2 Cor. 5. 20.* together with the duties of thankfulnessse, which God doth call for from those who accept the offer, *Matth. 11. 29.* and the fearfull judgements which do await on such who will not imbrace the offered friendship, *Heb. 2. 3.* So the publishing of this doctrine of peace, is the gladdest tydings which ever sounded in the ears of lost sinners; for, the Apostle, speaking of Christs preaching of the Gospel, saith, *He came and preached peace:* the word rendered *preached*, doth signifie (and accordingly is translated, *Rom. 10. 15.*) *to bring glad tydings.* 4. When Christ doth send His called Ministers with an offer of peace

peace and reconciliation unto a people, it is all one, as if He himself in His own person did come and make an offer of Him; And therefore the word of reconciliation in their mouth, should be received and accepted by those unto whom it is offered, with the same readinesse, confidence and reverence, as they would receive it from Christ Himself, *Gal. 4. 14.* for, though Christ preached immediately, and in His own person, only to the Jews, *Rom. 15. 8.* yet the Apostle saith He preached also unto the Gentiles, because He sent His Apostles and Ministers to preach unto them; *And came, and preached peace to you which were afar off.* 5. They may be nigh to God as to their external and Church-state, living under the drop of means, and enjoying the privilege of all divine Ordinances, who are yet unreconciled to God, and holding up the enmity which is betwixt the Lord and them: for, Christ behoved to preach peace, even to those who were nigh, to wit, in the respects presently mentioned, which implyeth they were not yet at peace with God; *And to them that were nigh.* 6. For whomsoever Christ hath purchased peace upon the crosse, to those he maketh an offer of peace and reconciliation in the preaching of the Gospel; And therefore He hath not died for all: for, the Apostle sheweth, that, as Christ purchased peace for both Jew and Gentile, ver. 16. so He came and preached peace to both; even to *you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.*

— *Verf. 18. For through him we both have an acceffe by one Spirit unto the Father.*

THE Apostle, thirdly, proveth that the Gentiles were effectually called, by the preaching of the Gospel, to partake of purchased peace and reconciliation equally with the Jews; because they both had equal acceffe and liberty to approach unto God in the practice of all commanded duties, as unto their own reconciled God and Father; for, the word rendered
acceffe,

accesse, hath an allusion to the courts of Princes, where petitioners are admitted unto *accesse* to their Prince, even in the very presence-chamber. Concerning which *accesse*, he sheweth, first, that it is through Christ, He having removed all those obstructions and impediments which might have marred it. And, secondly, that it is by the one Spirit of God, who doth create, preserve, quicken, and actuate those graces, in the exercise whereof, they obtained *accesse* unto God. *Doct. 1.* One main fruit and evidence of reconciliation is *accesse* unto God, whereby reconciled souls have not only liberty to approach unto God in the enjoyment of all divine Ordinances, (which *accesse* is the priviledge of all within the visible Church, whether they be reconciled or not, *Psal.* 147. 19.) but also freedom, and liberty of spirit to approach unto God in the exercise of all their saving graces, by which they do enjoy communion with God, and especially in the confident, bold and reverent exercising of their faith, both as to the change of their state in justification, *Rom.* 5. 2. and as to their sanctification, and all the duties thereof, *Philip.* 4. 13. which *accesse* to God, is chiefly attained in the duties of prayer and praise, as having God for their direct and immediate object: This is that *accesse*, which in some measure floweth from peace and reconciliation with God, and is an evidence of it: for, the Apostle proveth, that the Gospel was effectually preached in order to their peace and reconciliation, because they had *accesse* to God; *We both have accesse to the Father.*

2. There can be no *accesse*, or familiar approaching unto God by sinners, who are not in Jesus Christ, and come not to God through Him; seeing God is a consuming fire unto such, *Heb.* 12. 29. Their sins having divided betwixt Him and them, *Isa.* 59. 2. and so closed up all *accesse* unto God, untill Jesus Christ do apply unto them the merit of His death, whereby He blotteth out their sin, *Rom.* 3. 25. and bringeth them unto a state of favour with God, and so maketh a patent door for *accesse*

cesse unto Him, *Rom. 5. 1, 2.* and keepeth it alwayes patent by His continued intercession, *Heb. 7.-25.* which their renewed provocations would otherwise dayly, and hourly close and obstruēt, 1 *Job. 2. 1.* for, saith he, *through Him*, that is, Christ, *we both have an accesse to the father.* 3. Christ is the only Mediator betwixt God and man, by whom alone we have accesse and liberty to approach unto God in the exercise of our graces, whether in the duty of prayer, or any other way, and not by the mediation of Saints or Angels: for, saith he, *through him we have an access, or manuduction to the father.* 4. This accesse, and approaching unto God, is not lo- call by passing from one place to another; especially seing there is no place, wherein accesse to God may not be had, *Job. 4. 21. 23.* but it is spirituall, consisting in the motion of the heart towards God, in the exercise of saving and spirituall graces: for, so much is implied, while this accesse is ascribed unto the Spirit, as the efficient thereof; *We have an accesse by the spirit.* 5. It is not sufficient, in order to our accesse unto God, that obstructions be removed, and a door made patent by Christs merit and intercession, through which we may enter; but, such is partly our impotency, *Job. 15. -5.* and partly our avernesse from making use of the offered opportunity, *Luk. 14. 17, 18, &c.* that except the Spirit of God do cause us enter, by creating spirituall graces in us, *Ezek. 36. 26.* by actuating, and exciting those graces, *Cant. 4. 16.* and especially by helping our infirmities in prayer, and stirring up a vehement flame of holy and ardent affections, which may serve, as wings, to elevate our spirits to God, *Rom. 8. 26.* Except, I say, the Spirit of the Lord did thus, we could not otherwise have any accesse unto God: for, he saith, *through him we have an accesse by one spirit.* 6. As it is one, and the self same Spirit of God, who breatheth upon the graces of Gods people, *Cant. 4. 16.* and thereby giveth them accesse unto God; So it concerneth us much, as we would find accesse and liberty of approaching unto God.

to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; there being nothing, that marreth access to God, and fellowship with Him more, than imbittered spirits, and division of heart among the people of God, 2 *Corinth.* 13. 11. for, therefore doth the Apostle mention the one Spirit of God, to shew, that the Spirit doth unite those among themselves, upon whom this rich blessing of access is bestowed; *We both have an access by one Spirit.* 7. As there are three distinct persons in the God-head, the Father, Son, and Spirit; So the enjoying of the Father, is the highest happinesse, which can be attained, and in which the soul doth rest content, when it is attained; the Son again is the way, by which we come to the Father; and the Spirit our guide, which causeth us enter this way, and go alongs in it: all which is clearly hinted at here; *through Him*, that is, Christ, *we have an access by one Spirit to the Father.*

Vers. 19. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God.

HERE beginneth the fourth branch of the second part of this Chapter, where, by way of a conclusion drawn from what is said in the six former Verses, the Apostle setteth forth that excellent and blessed state, wherein the Ephesians now were: which, though in some respects, and in some things at least, by proportion it may be applied to the state of the visible Church, to wit, in so far as the members thereof had all those privileges here spoken of in their offer, upon the terms held forth in the Gospel, and were under the drop of those means which the Lord doth ordinarily blesse, and make effectually for working a saving interest in, and right unto all those: yea, and had a present actual right to the external part of those privileges; even the visible Church being in some respects Gods City, Household and Temple, at least, the suburbs, utter-court, and porch

porch thereof, and having her own answerable privileges, which are in some measure proportionall to those of the invisible Church; yet, seeing (as was shewed formerly upon the exposition of ver. 13.) those excellent things, here spoken of, are not fully, and to their outmost perfection verified in any, but in the invisible Church and the truly regenerate, the members thereof; Therefore I shal open up the mind of the Spirit of God, as aiming mainly at those, and give the meaning of those excellent things here mentioned, as they appertain chiefly to such, in the mean time, leaving it unto the judicious Reader to gather from what is said, how, and in what respects they are applicable unto the visible Church. And so that we may enter the exposition of the words, The Apostle setteth forth their present happy condition, first, negatively, by shewing what they were not, neither *strangers* nor *forreigners*, whereby with allusion to those, who are not free-men of an Incorporation or City, but either *strangers* (that is, such who have neither the freedom of the City, nor a place of habitation in it, but have their residence far from it,) or *forreigners*, (that is, such, who though they have their residence in the City, yet are not free-men, but sojourners for a season,) he sheweth that the second branch of their former misery, spoken of, ver. 12. which includeth all the rest (even their being aliens from the commonwealth of *Israel*, deprived of all union and communion, either with the invisible or visible Church) was now removed. Secondly, he setteth forth their present blessed condition positively, under three similitudes, whereof two are in this verse. In the first, he compareth the whole Church, and especially the invisible Church of true Believers unto a City, and sheweth that those believing Ephesians had a right unto all the privileges, and immunities of that city, the chief whereof are freedom from Gods curse, *Rev. 22. 3.* and a right unto eternal life, *Rev. 22. -5.* And this they had equally with all the other citizens and free members of that City

City; for, the chiefeſt Saints were but their *fellow-citi-
zens*. In the ſecond ſimilitude, he comparſeth the ſame
Church unto an houſhold, or family, and calleth it
Gods houſhold, affirming, that all of thoſe believing
Ephesians did belong to this houſhold. So that he doth
hereby expreſſe a greater degree of nearneſſe to, and
communion with, God and His Church, which they
had attained unto, than was ſet forth by the former ſi-
militude; there being a ſtraiter ty of familiarity and
friendſhip between the members of one family among
themſelves, and with the maſter of the houſe, than is
between the members of one city, whether among
themſelves, or with their Magiſtrates and Rulers.

Doct. 1. So apt are even good men to be exalted above
meaſure with the excellent things of God beſtowed upon
them, *2 Corin. 12. 7.* that it is not ſafe at any time to
think upon thoſe things, except our former miſery and
vileneſſe be joyntly thought upon alſo, that ſo we may
be kepted humble: for, the Apoſtle, while he is of pur-
poſe to ſet forth their excellent priviledges, doth not ob-
ſcurely preſent their former miſery unto their view alſo,
by ſaying, *ye are no more ſtrangers and foreigners*, which
implieth they were once ſo. 2. As it is not an eaſie
matter to convince ſinners of their loſt and miſerable
eſtate by nature; So it is no leſſe difficulty, when they
are once made truly ſenſible of ſin and miſery, to con-
vince them throughly of theſe riches which are in Gods
mercy, and of that bleſſed eſtate which they are
brought unto by Gods free grace in Chriſt: for there-
fore the Apoſtle findeth it neceſſary, not only to aſſert
there was a gracious change wrought in them, *ver. 13.*
but alſo in the following verſes to ſhew forth all the
cauſes of this moſt bleſſed change, from which he doth
here by an undeniable conſequence lay down this con-
cluſion: *Now therefore ye are no more ſtrangers and for-
eigners.* 3. That we may highly prize, and think aright
of Gods mercy in Chriſt maniſeſted to Believers, we
would look upon it, both in the privative and poſitive

effects thereof, both in those evils of sin and misery, which He delivereth from, and those saving blessings, whether relating to grace here, or glory hereafter, which He doth confer and bestow: for, so doth the Apostle here set forth the rich effects of Gods grace towards those Ephesians, both negatively and positively; *ye are no more strangers, but fellow-citizens.* 4. Though Believers be strangers in the world, as to their outward condition; some having no certain place of abode, but driven from their own habitations, *1 Pet. 1. 1.* and all of them being disposed to look upon earth as a strange countrie, and the contentments thereof as uncertain, perishing, and therefore not their own, *Heb. 13. 14.* Yet they are not strangers unto, but citizens of that city, not made with hands, even the blessed society of the Saints, in which they live, *Philip. 3. 20.* unto whose privileges they have a right, and shall at last be brought to the full possession of all its outmost blessings and immunities in heaven, *Job. 14. 2. 3.* for, it is in this respect he saith, *ye are no more strangers, and forreigners.* 5. The state and privileges of Gods Church consisting of all true Believers, are such, as fitly may be represented by some great Incorporation or City, which is a society of people joyned together under one Magistracy, ruled by the same Laws, enjoying the same common privileges and immunities, and strongly defended by walls and bulwarks: In like manner all Believers are united under Christ their supream Magistrate and Head, *Eph. 1. - 21.* living under one common Law, the will of God revealed in Scripture, which is also written in their hearts by that one Law-giver, *Jer. 31. 33.* enjoying one and the same common privileges, (not only access to divine Ordinances, but) of Justification, (*Rom. 8. 30.*) Adoption, (*Eph. 1. 5.*) Sanctification, (*Eph. 5. 26.*) peace of conscience, (*Rom. 5. 1.*) and a right to heaven, the inheritance of the Saints, *Job. 3. 16.* and all of them having Gods special protection, *Psal. 91. 1.* yea, and salvation for walls and bulwarks, *Isa. 26. 1.* for, this similitude,

similitude, whereby the Church is compared to a city, is implied, while it is said, *Ye are fellow-citizens with the Saints.* 6. Though those, who, are federally holy, and externally Saints, (See upon *Philip. 1. ver. 1. dect. 5.*) are members of this City, as it speaketh a society of visible professors, *Psal. 48. 8.* yet only those, who are inherently holy, their natures being renewed, the seeds of saving grace implanted and growing up unto good works, only such, I say, are free members of this City, as it speaketh the society of the Church invisible, who enjoy immunity from Gods wrath and curse, with an actual right unto eternal life: for, that the Saints only are free members of this City is implied, while he saith, *Fellow-citizens with the Saints.* 7. Whatever differences are among Believers, as to their worldly condition, *Eph. 6. 5. 9.* their severall functions in the Church visible, *1 Cor. 12. 28.* and their different degrees of gifts and graces, *Rom. 12. 6.* Yet, all of them do enjoy an equall right to all those saving blessings of the Covenant of Grace, the Charter of this Incorporation, (*Isa. 56. 4.*) which are of absolute necessity to the life of grace here, or of glory hereafter, *Psal. 84. 11.* and without which none can be a free Burgesse of this City: for, he maketh the believing Ephesians *fellow-citizens with the Saints*, even the chiefeft of them, as having the same right with them unto all such immunities and priviledges. 8. As the whole society of the invisible Church chiefly is Gods own great household and family in a peculiar manner, and is therefore admitted to a most near and intimate communion with Him, such as a man hath with his own domesticks, *Rev. 3. 20.* yea, and is in a speciall way provided and cared for by Him, *1 Tim. 5. 8.* So, whenever a man is reconciled to God by the blood of Jesus Christ, he becometh a member of this holy and blessed family, and enjoyeth all the priviledges thereof, whereof this is one, in which it differeth from other families, that in this household there are no mercenary servants, but all the domesticks are sons and heirs, *Job. 1.*

12. *Col. 3. 24.* for, by the household of God he meaneth the catholick Church, affirming that those Ephesians upon their reconciliation with God became members of it; *And of the household of God,* saith he.

Verf. 20. And are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.

IN the third similitude he compareth the Church unto an edifice or stately building, and sheweth that those Ephesians were a part of it. Which similitude doth hold forth a further degree of nearnesse to, and communion with God and His Church, than the former; in so far as the stones of an edifice are most strictly joyned together, both with the foundation and amongst themselves: and herein he doth, doubtlesse, allude to *Solomons Temple*, which did prefigure the Church of the truly Regenerate.

And, first, that he may with greater clearnesse set forth this their happy condition, he doth describe this spiritual, stately, and, in several things, admirable edifice from four things. First, in this verse, from its foundation, or that which doth support the weight of the building, which he calleth the *foundation of the Prophets and Apostles*; whereby is not meant, that the Prophets and Apostles in their own persons are the foundation of the Church; for, they are built, as lively stones, with the rest of the Elect, upon the foundation, *Philip. 3. 8, 9.* And therefore we must hereby understand the foundation, which was laid by them as wise master-builders under God, *1 Cor. 3. 9, 10.* to wit, the Doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles, or rather Jesus Christ the sum and scope of their Doctrine, *Rom. 10. 4. 1 Cor. 2. 2.* as the Apostle expoundeth himself, *1 Cor. 3. 11.* and is clear from *Isa. 28. 16.* to which place he doth here allude, and which is also more plainly set forth in the close of this same verse, where the Apostle proveth, that they
were

were built upon that foundation ; because Christ is that corner-stone, spoken of, *Iſa.* 28. 16. and *Pſal.* 118. 22. So that the foundation and corner-stone muſt be both one in this place, ſeing he inferreth the one from the other, only with this difference, that Christ is not only the loweſt corner-stone, which lyeth under the whole building, and is a part of the foundation, to which corner-stone He is compared, *Iſa.* 28. 16. but He is alſo the higheſt, to which He is compared, *Pſal.* 118. 22. Yea, and ſuch a corner-stone as reacheth all alongs the angle from the foundation to the top of the building, binding the two walls of the Church together, which are the two Nations of Jews and Gentiles: for, the word in the Originall ſignifieth the *extream corner-stone*, that is, both the higheſt and the loweſt, and conſequently compriseth all which ly between thoſe two extreams: neither doth the word imply, that there are any other ſubordinate, or ſecundary foundations, or corner-stones, ſeing the word is better rendered *extream corner* than *chief*. *Doct.* 1. Thoſe excellent privileges beſtowed upon Believers, conſiſting in, and flowing from union and communion with Christ and His Church, are of ſuch a ſpiritually, ſublime and divine nature; and we are ſo carnall, dull and ſlow of underſtanding, that there are no proper ſignificant words, whereby to expreſſe them ſo as we may underſtand them: for, therefore is it, that the Spirit of God doth ſpeak of them to us in our own language, and taketh ſimilitudes from things earthly to ſet them forth, that ſo we may, at leaſt, underſtand ſomewhat of them, as here he maketh uſe of a ſimilitude taken from a ſtately building for that end; *And are built upon the foundation.* 2. So excellent and full are thoſe privileges, and ſo compleat is that happineſſe, which is enjoyed by Believers, that not any one ſimilitude, taken from earthly things, can fully, or in any meaſure ſatisfyingly ſet them forth: for, therefore is it, that the Spirit of God doth multiply ſimilitudes to this purpoſe, that what is want-

ing in one, may be supplied by another ; as here, having set forth the happy state of Believers from the similitude, first of a city, next of a family, ver. 19. he doth in this verse add a third similitude, taken from an edifice ; *And are built upon the foundation*, saith he. 3. So steadable is Jesus Christ unto Believers, and of such universal use, in order to their being built up in one temple unto God, that there is not any one piece of a building, by which His steadable usefulness can be sufficiently represented. He is not only the foundation-stone, who, being the first stone which was laid in the building, (*Rev. 13. 8.*) doth support this whole spirituall edifice, *Matth. 16. 18.* who was brought so low by His sufferings, and dayly in the preaching of the Gospel, that the meanest Believer may be rolled upon Him, *Matth. 11. 28.* and upon whom the weights of all Believers great and small do hing, *Isa. 22. 24.* but He is also the corner-stone, who reacheth from the foundation to the top of this spirituall edifice, and joyneth Jew and Gentile, the two walls of the Church, together in one, (see ver. 15.) yea, and all particular Believers are united in Him, *Joh. 17. -22, 23.* who breaketh the violent blasts of all those storms, which would otherwise overthrow the edifice, *Isa. 25. 4.* and use to beat most violently upon the corners of buildings, *Job 1. 19.* who also is the choice of the stones of the building, (as corner-stones use to be, *Jer. 51. 26.*) as being of more durable substance, even the great and mighty God, *Isa. 9. 6.* and is in His humane nature adorned and polished with a variety and fulnesse of created graces above His fellows, *Psal. 45. 7.* as corner-stones are more curiously ingraven and wrought than the rest of the building, *Psal. 144. 12.* in whose stability and strength, the strength of the whole spirituall edifice (*Matth. 16. 18.*) and of every lively stone thereof doth consist, *Job. 10. 28.* as the strength of an artificiall building consisteth in the goodnesse of the foundation and corners, *Matth. 7. 24, 25.* for, the Apostle, speak-
ing

ing of this spirituall edifice, giveth unto Christ the place both of foundation and corner, while he saith, *Ye are built upon the foundation of the Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief (or extreame) corner-stone.* 4. That any man be a part of this spirituall edifice, and do partake of all those glorious priviledges which flow from union and communion with God and His Church, and are enjoyed by all the lively stones of this building, he must be built upon Christ the foundation, taking band upon Him by the cement of lively faith: for, the Apostle, shewing that those Ephesians were a part of this spirituall building, saith they were built on Christ; *And are built upon the foundation.* 5. There is no closing with, & taking band upon Christ a right as a foundation-stone, or rock for salvation, except He be conceived and accepted of, as He is revealed and offered in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; for, He is called *the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles*, to wit, whom they set forth and placed as a foundation in the Church by their Doctrine and Writings. 6. Though God Himself be the principall author and builder of this spirituall edifice, *Isa. 28. 16. 1 Corin. 3. 6.* Yet, He imployeth His called Ministers and Servants, as instruments under Him, for carrying on this work, among whom He did make speciall use of the Prophets and Apostles for laying the foundation, in so far, as they first did reveal and preach Jesus Christ, and commit to writing such truths concerning Him, as are necessary for salvation, *Job. 20. 31.* while other ordinary Ministers are employed in the preaching of Jesus Christ, as He is revealed in Scripture, to build up the Elect upon the foundation, which was laid by them, *2 Tim. 2. 2.* for, he calleth Christ *the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles*, that is, whom they placed in the Church by their Doctrine and Writings, by which He maketh them to differ from ordinary Ministers; *And are built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles.* 7. There is a sweet harmony and full agreement between the Do-

Strine and Writings of the Prophets and Apostles: as in all other things; so especially, in holding forth Jesus Christ for a foundation and rock of salvation unto Believers; the latter having taught and written nothing, but what was partly prefigured in types, and partly foretold in propheties by the former, *Acts* 26. 22, 23. for, *Paul* affirmeth, that the same foundation, Christ, was laid by both, while he saith, *Built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles.* 8. How little ground the Papists have from this, or any other Scripture, blasphemously to teach, that the Pope is the foundation of the universal Church visible, in whose voice and sentence the faith of all Believers ought to be determined and built, appeareth not only from the meaning of the words asserted in the exposition, but also from this, that all the Apostles are spoken of, as having equal influence upon this foundation, so that *Peter*, whose successor the Pope doth plead himself to be, had no privilege in this above the rest; for, he saith, *Ye are built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles.* 9. Though men are easily moved to combine together in ill, *Psal.* 83. 3. as being naturally inclined to it, *Gen.* 6. 5. yet, such is the antipathy of every man by nature unto that which is truly good, *Rom.* 3. 12. and unto all other men in that which is good; that nothing lesse was required for uniting all the Elect among themselves, so, as to make them joyntly endeavour the bringing about of Gods glory in their own salvation, than that Jesus Christ should interpose as an arbiter with power, causing the parties at variance to be at peace and become a center, wherein all those scattered lines might meet, and a corner, wherein the severall walls and stones of the building are conjoynd: for, saith *Paul*, it was necessary, in order to this union, that *Jesus Christ himself should be the extreame corner-stone.*

Verf,

Verſ. 21. *In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.*

THis ſtately edifice is deſcribed, ſecondly, from the artificiall and altogether divine ſtructure, and joyning together, of all its parts, which is the beauty of any building. This orderly frame and curious ſtructure of the Church, conſiſteth in theſe two. Firſt, That the whole edifice, and all its parts are firmly joyned in *him*, that is, in Chriſt the foundation, to wit, by faith; their life being framed according to His preſcript and example, *Matth. 11. 29.* and their faith imbracing Him, according as He is held forth in the Word, without addition or diminution, *Col. 2. 6.* even as the whole frame of a materiall building is made conform to the foundation. Next, That all the parts of this edifice are ſtrongly joyned together among themſelves by the grace of love, *Col. 3. 14.* and orderly ſituate, every one acting towards the good of another in their ſeverall ſtations, *1 Corinth. 12. 25, 26.* in ſo far, as they are regenerate, and conſequently are parts of this building, *1 Corinth. 12. 5.* even as all the parts of a materiall building have a commodious correſpondency one to another, and thereby are fitly framed together. This edifice is deſcribed, thirdly, from its perpetuall increaſe and growth, flowing alſo from Chriſt the foundation: which growth is to be underſtood, not only with reſpect to the whole body of the Church, which groweth by the addition of new converts, *Iſa. 54. 3.* but alſo, and mainly to every member in particular, which do increaſe and grow in gifts and graces, *2 Pet. 3. 18.* And laſtly, it is deſcribed from the end intended in rearing up this ſtately growing edifice, even to be an holy temple unto God, wherein He may manifeſt His preſence, and be perpetually ſerved and glorified as it was in *Solomons temple. Pſal. 132. 13. Doct. 1.* Jeſus Chriſt doth differ from the foundation of all other buildings in this, that the whole building, and every ſtone

stone of it doth take immediate band upon the foundation; all Believers being most intimately joyned to Him by faith, and not by the intervening mediation of others, as it is in materiall buildings: for, the Apostle sheweth, that all the building (no part thereof being excepted) is in Him, while he saith, *In whom all the building.* 2. As there is a strict conjunction, and a kind of proportion between Believers and Christ, as also among themselves, even such, as is branched forth in the exposition of this verse; so a great part of the strength and beauty of the Church, and of all its parts, consisteth in this conjunction and proportion; and nothing is more uncomely than for a Believer to be disproportioned unto Christ, either in his faith, or practice, and to other Believers in his coldrife affection to them, or his not acting orderly in his station for their good: for, the Apostle describeth this spirituall edifice from its divine structure and curious joyning of all its parts, as that, wherein a great part of its beauty and strength doth consist; *In whom all the building fully framed together.* 3. As this spirituall edifice doth differ from other buildings, that not only the whole edifice, but also all the parts of it (1 Pet. 2. 5.) are indued with life; a life, which is wholly spirituall, and floweth from their union with Christ the foundation; So this life of theirs, is, for the time but imperfect, their spiritual graces having not as yet attained that fulnesse and strength which is required: for, the Apostle, while he ascribeth a spiritual growth to all the building, doth imply both those, seing growth supponeth life, and want of just stature and perfection; *In whom all the building groweth.* 4. As growth in grace, is a priviledge which appertaineth to all the parts of this spirituall building who are yet on earth; so this growth of theirs, doth flow from their union and communion with Christ; and the more their union with Him be improved to the dayly extracting of a renewed influence from Him, they cannot choose but thrive the better in this their spiritual growth: for,

for, the Apostle ascribeth growth to all this building, and growth from their being in Christ, and vertue coming from Him; *In whom all the building groweth, and in the Lord*: which words, it seemeth, are added, to shew, that not only the first beginnings, but also the continued progresse and increase of grace do flow from the Lord Christ. 5. As growth of grace in every particular Believer; So the increase of the Church in generall, by the addition of new converts, doth flow, not from created might, or power, *Zech. 4. 6.* but from the vertue of Jesus Christ, who, having the nations given Him for an inheritance, (*Psal. 2. 8.*) will in despite of all opposition, enlarge the bounds of His dominion, untill He attain the full possession of all to whom He hath a right: for, this growth is to be understood also with respect to the whole body, by the addition of new members; In which respect also the Apostle here saith, *It groweth in the Lord.* 6. As all Believers joyntly, and each Believer a part, (*1 Cor. 6. 19.*) are a temple for the Lord, wherein He doth manifest His speciall presence, and wherein He will be worshipped, by offering up spirituall sacrifices of prayer, praises and all the duties of new obedience, *1 Pet. 2. 9.* So, that they may be a temple indeed for this holy God, they must be much in the study of holinesse, as in that which becometh His house, *Psal. 93. 5.* for, the Apostle sheweth that this whole building groweth up to be a temple for God, and an holy temple; *All the building groweth unto an holy temple.* 7. The more that Believers do endeavour to grow in grace, without resting upon any measure, they may expect the more of Gods speciall presence to be manifested in them, as in His own temple: for, it is the growing of this building mainly, which maketh it fit to be a temple for God; *All the building groweth unto an holy temple.*

Verſ. 22. In whom you alſo are builded together, for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

THe Apoſtle doth now, in the next and laſt place, apply what he hath ſaid of this ſpirituall edifice, and of the Churches happy eſtate under that ſimilitude unto thoſe believing Ephesians in particular, by ſhewing, that even they were built up together with all other ſincere Believers upon Jeſus Chriſt the foundation, and for this end, that they might be a place of habitation, where God might dwell, as manifeſting His ſpeciall preſence in them, by the ſaving operations of His holy Spirit.

Doct. 1. That our faith may be ſaving, and our comfort ſolid, it is neceſſary, not only that we know and believe thoſe excellent priviledges which belong to the Church of God in generall: But we muſt alſo, obſerving the due order, make application of them unto our ſelves in particular: for, *Paul* teacheth ſo much, while, having ſet forth the happy eſtate of all Believers in generall, he maketh application thereof unto thoſe Ephesians in particular; *In whom alſo you are builded together*, ſaith he.

2. That this particular application may be made in due order, it is neceſſary, that in the firſt place we make application of Chriſt unto our ſelves, laying hold upon Him by faith; that ſo being in Him, we may have right unto all thoſe ſaving priviledges, which are purchaſed by Him: for, the Apoſtle ſheweth this was the order, wherein thoſe priviledges were applied unto the believing Ephesians; they were firſt united to Chriſt, and ſo had acceſſe unto all the reſt which follow; *In whom alſo you are builded together for an habitation of God.*

3. That we may rightly apply Chriſt unto our ſelves, it is neceſſary that we lay hold upon Him in order to all thoſe ends, for which He is offered in the Goſpel, even to thoſe which imply an obligation upon us of duty, both unto other Believers and unto God: for, thoſe Ephesians were ſo united to

Chriſt

Christ by faith; that, as a consequence thereof, they were also united one to another, and to all Believers by love, and made an habitation for God; *In whom you are builded together, for an habitation of God.* 4. Jesus Christ doth differ from the foundations of other buildings in this, that every particular Believer is not only laid upon Him, and supported by Him, as it is in materiall buildings; but they are also indented in Him, and hid, as it were, in the clefts of that rock by saving faith; so that the foundation covereth the whole building, and serveth for a refuge from the storm, and a shadow from the heat, *Isa. 25. 4.* for, he saith not, *upon whom*, but *in whom you also are builded.* 5. As all Believers, how far so ever removed by large distance, are yet most strictly tied and joyned together; So, by taking band with Christ the foundation, they are fastened one to another, even as the stones of a building: for, he saith, *In whom you are builded together*: union among themselves did follow upon their being *in Him.* 6. The more deeply engaged that any have been before conversion in Sathan's service and the slavery of their lusts, their after conversion, and being builded upon Christ for an habitation to God, is the rarer priviledge, the more to be admired and highly esteemed of; for, he saith not simply, *in whom you are builded*, but *in whom you also*: which highteneth the purpose, as a thing wonderfull, and hardly credible, the apostle having an eye doubtlesse to their former slavery unto Satan and their own lusts, spoken of, ver. 2, 3. 7. So inseparable is that union, and connexion among the Persons of the blessed Trinity, that the presence and indwelling of one is sufficient to prove the indwelling of all: for, they are an habitation to God the Father and Son, because the Spirit did dwell in them and sanctifie them; *An habitation of God through the Spirit.* 8. Though all the external actions of the God-head do belong to all the Persons of the blessed Trinity; Yet some of those actions are usually ascribed unto one, more than the rest, according as they carry
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some proportion and likenesse to the personall properties of each person : for, the sanctification of Believers (in regard of which effect God is said to dwell in Believers, seeing He thereby doth manifest His speciall presence in them) is here ascribed unto the Spirit, while those Ephesians are said to be *an habitation unto God through the Spirit.*

C H A P. I I I.

IN the first part of this Chapter (which beginneth ver. 2.) the Apostle setteth forth the dignity of his Apostolick Office towards the Gentiles, with his calling to it, and qualifications for it. And, first, he propoundeth the matter briefly, that this office was committed to him, ver. 2. Next, he doth more largely illustrate it. First, by shewing his qualification and furniture for this Office, to wit, his knowledge and insight in the mysterie of the Gospel, which He was to preach : for proof whereof, he appealeth to what he had written in the two former Chapters, ver. 3, 4. and having called the Gospel a *Mysterie*, he sheweth the reason why he did so, to wit, because it was not so known of old, as now under the Gospel, ver. 5. and giveth a brief sum of this mysterie, as to that part of it which was most controverted, to wit, the calling of the Gentiles to the free enjoyment of Gospel-priviledges, ver. 6. Next, by shewing his call from God, and authority to dispense this furniture : where he taketh occasion to extol and magnifie his Office, and the grace of God, which called him to it, from eight distinct considerations. First, from the gifts wherewith he was furnished to discharge it. Secondly, from the powerfull assistance of Gods Spirit, which wrought in him and by him in the discharging of it, ver. 7. Thirdly, from his own unworthinesse, who was intrusted with it. Fourth-

Fourthly, from the excellency of the subject matter, which he was to set forth, even *the unsearchable riches of Christ*, ver. 8. Fifthly, from the great benefit, which by his conscientious discharging thereof was to accresse unto men, even their more clear understanding of that mysterie, ver. 9. Sixthly, from the same benefit, which did thereby redound to the glorified Angels, ver. 10. Seventhly, from the eternity of Gods purpose to intrust him in that office, for bringing about the forementioned ends, ver. 11. And lastly, from three excellent priviledges, *boldnesse, acceffe, confidence*, whereof Believers did partake by the means of his Ministry; as being thereby brought to Christ, in whom they enjoyed all those, ver. 12. From all which grounds he dehortheth them from fainting, notwithstanding of his present sad sufferings in discharging so honourable an employment, ver. 13.

In the second part of the Chapter, he doth indirectly incite them to persevere, and make progresse in the experimentall knowledge of, and in communion with Christ, by giving a sum of his fervent prayers unto God for them to that purpose. The occasion of which prayer, is, ver. 1. his gesture in prayer, and to whom he did pray, to wit, God, described from his relation to Christ and the Church, are, ver. 14. 15. The particulars prayed for, are, 1. Their strengthening in the inward man by the Spirit, ver. 16. 2. Christs inhabiting their heart by faith, ver. 17-. 3. Their experimentall knowledge and comprehension of Christs boundlesse love, flowing from their firm adhering to the love of God in Christ by faith, ver. -17, 18, 19- 4. Their full replenishing with the perfection of all graces in glory, ver. -19. The conclusion of his prayer containeth a description of God, taken from His almighty power to do above our petitions and conceptions, ver. 20. and a thanksgiving unto God so described, and upon that ground, ver. 21.

Verf.

Verf. 1. *For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles.*

THis verse belongeth to the purpose contained in the second part of the Chapter, which, being begun here, is interrupted untill ver. 14. The reason whereof shall be shown, ver. 2. In the mean time he doth here declare the occasion of his following prayer to God on their behalf to have been, even that, which he hath but presently spoken concerning them, to wit, their being already builded upon Christ by faith, together with all true Believers; for, the words, *for this cause*, relate to the close of the preceeding Chapter. And withall, that his praying to God so fervently for them may have the more weight, in order to their up-stirring to endeavour after that which he prayeth for, he describeth himself, who is to pray for them, from his present captivity and bonds, under which he was at *Rome* for the truth of Christ, and for the behoof and edification of the Gentiles: (of whom these Ephesians were a part) for, *Paul* being intrusted, in a peculiar manner, to be the Apostle and Doctor of the Gentiles, *1 Tim.* 2. 7. it followeth, that all his sufferings, in discharge of that trust, were for their sake. Besides, that the nearest cause of his sufferings from the Jews, his chief adversaries, was his carrying of the Gospel unto the Gentiles, *Act.* 22, 21, 22. *Doct.* 1. The pains of Ministers with, and for the Lords people, are so far from being at an end, when people are brought to Christ and built upon Him by faith, that even their being brought this length, doth lay a new tye upon their Ministers, both to deal with God on their behalf, and to labour with themselves so much the more earnestly, that, not only they do not losse those things which are already wrought, *2 Job.* ver. 8. but also they may make progresse answerable vnto their fair beginnings; lest otherwise they mar their own comfort, *Psal.* 51. 12. make the name of God

to be evil spoken of, 2 Sam. 12. 14. and thereby draw down sore corrections upon themselves, 2 Sam. 12. 10. for, the Apostle his praying so fervently upon their behalf, and thereby stirring them up to endeavour after that themselves, which he did pray for, was occasioned by their being built upon Christ for an habitation unto God; for *this cause*, saith he, *I Paul--do bow my knees*, as it followeth, ver. 14. which closeth up the sentence begun here. 2. Such powerfull influence hath God upon hearts, that He can make those, who for the time are cruel persecuters of truth, prove afterwards famous Martyrs and sufferers for it: for, *Paul* was once a bloody persecuter, Gal. 1. -13. but is now a famous sufferer; *I Paul, the prisoner*, saith he, or, as it is in the Original, *that prisoner*, implying he was no ordinary, but a noted sufferer; his sufferings being in a manner singular, 2 Cor. 11. 23, &c. 3. Sufferings for Christ and truth are so far from being cause of just reproach to those who suffer, from others, or from being matter of shame and blushing to themselves, That they are rather a glory unto them, yea, and sometimes will be gloried in by them, as that, wherein their chiefest honour standeth: for, *Paul*, after the example of Kings and Nobles, who design themselves by their most honourable stiles, doth in place of all, take this one, of a prisoner for Truth, unto himself; *I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ*. 4. So far ought people be from stumbling at truth, because of the oppressed and suffering lot of those who preach it, that even their sufferings for truth should make their pains the more acceptable, and adde a weight unto the Word of truth in their mouth: for, *Paul* describeth himself from his present suffering lot, that both his person and pains might have the more weight and efficacy with them; *I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ*. 5. The Lord doth sometimes give so far way to the rage of persecuters, as that the choicest instruments for carrying on His work may be, for a season, restrained in their liberty, and so laid aside as uselesse, even in a time

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when there is greatest need of their pains and diligence ; for, *Paul*, an eminent instrument, (*1 Corin. 15. 10.*) was at such a time cast in prison ; I *Paul*, the prisoner of *Jesus Christ*. 6. No afflictions or sufferings do loose a Pastor from his duty towards the Lords people, over whom he is set : But when he is restrained in his liberty from Preaching to them, he ought even then endeavour their edification by writing to them, and praying for them: for, *Paul*, being a prisoner, doth yet write to those Ephesians, and pray for them ; I *Paul*, the prisoner--do bow my knees. 7. A prisoner for Christ and truth, hath this advantage beyond all other prisoners in ordinary wars, he is a prisoner, not so much to those who persecute him, as to *Jesus Christ*, his own Lord and General: and that not only, because he suffereth in His quarrell, but also he remaineth still in His custody, *Gen. 39. 21.* and at His disposall, who over-ruleth the rage of enemies so as that they cannot do the meanest prisoner of His any further hurt than seemeth good unto Him, *Dan. 3. 17.* for, in both those respects, *Paul* doth call himself Christs prisoner ; he was imprisoned for His sake, and at and during His overruling will and pleasure ; I *Paul*, the prisoner of *Jesus Christ*. 8. The Lord doth so out-wit His enemies, as their very restraining and imprisoning His servants, doth, contrary to their intention, tend to the furtherance of the Gospel; all their sufferings of that sort being real confirmations of the truth preached by them, *Phil. 1. -17.* and speaking examples for others to imitate, *Jam. 5. 10.* for, *Paul* sheweth, that his sufferings were for the Gentiles, though not for their redemption, *1 Cor. 1. -13-* yet for their good and edification in the mentioned respects ; I *Paul*, the prisoner- for you Gentiles. 9. This may exceedingly sweeten the sharpest sufferings of Gods servants, when they consider, they suffer nothing but what is measured out unto them by their Lord Christ ; that their sufferings are not for evil doing, but for Him and His truth who suffered for them, *2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.* and that
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not only their own salvation, but the salvation also of others, is some one way or other advanced by their sufferings: for, Pauls sufferings are sweetned from this, that he was the prisoner of *Jesus Christ*, and for the Gentiles.

Verf. 2. *If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you-ward.*

Here beginneth the first part of the Chapter, wherein the Apostle, by way of digression, setteth forth the dignity of his Apostolick Office towards the Gentiles; that thereby he may, not only guard them from stumbling at his sufferings, as is clear from ver. 13. but also give a reason of what he presently said, ver. 1. that he was a prisoner for them, to wit, because he had his Office from God towards them: for, lest they had doubted of the truth of that assertion, he presently breaketh off the former sentence in the very entry, without putting a close to it, untill ver. 14. as judging it more safe to keep them a little in suspense, and ignorant of that which he began to speak of, than to leave them with a doubt about the truth of any thing which he had already spoken; seeing ignorance of things, not yet revealed, is not so hazardous as misbelief of those truths which was revealed and known.

And therefore, in the first branch of the first part of the Chapter, contained in this verse, the Apostle doth briefly declare, that the Apostolick Office of dispensing and ministerial distributing the doctrine of free grace and salvation contained in the Gospel, here (called the *grace of God*, as, *Tit. 2. 11.*) was committed unto him with relation chiefly to the Gentiles, and particularly, to those Ephesians. See upon *Col. 1. ver. 25. doct. 3.* And as to the truth of this assertion, he appealeth to their own knowledge and conscience, if they had not heard it, and were not sufficiently instructed in it: for, the conditionall particle *if*, implyeth not any doubt of the

thing, but rather his great confidence, that they neither could nor would contradict it, seeing it was a thing publicly known from the history of his conversion, *Gal. 1. 22, 23.* and doubtlesse also from his own preaching while he was among them, *Act. 19. 10.* *Doct. 1.* Where a Minister is called, and sent by God unto a People, not only his Sermons, but also his actions and carriage, yea, his very sufferings in the discharge of his Calling, are blessed of God to be powerfull preachings for the good and edification of those among them, whom God intendeth good for: for, *Paul* proveth he was a prisoner for the Gentiles, or that his imprisonment and sufferings did contribute for their good and edification, because he was called of God to dispense the Gospel unto them; *If ye have heard of the dispensation-- which is given me to you-ward.* 2. The ministerial Office is not a lordly dominion, but a stewardship, whereby the Lord himself, who is great Master of that family, (*ver. 15.*) which is His House and Church, *1 Tim. 3. 15.* doth intrust some to break and divide the bread of life unto the rest: which therefore they must do with that measure of faithfulness (*1 Cor. 4. 2.*) and wisdom (*Mat. 24. 45.*) as they may be answerable unto Him who hath intrusted them; for, he calleth the ministerial Office intrusted to him, *the dispensation*, which signifieth the ordering of things belonging to the family so as may be most for its behoof: and being applyed unto God, with relation to His Church, it signifieth a most absolute power to dispose of those things as He pleaseth, (so is it taken, *Col. 1. 25.*) but being applyed unto His Ministers, as it is here, it signifieth only a subordinate ministerial power, for which the person intrusted must be countable, such as is the office of a steward in great families. See *1 Cor. 4. 1, 2.* *If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace, &c.* 3. The great thing which Ministers are to dispense and distribute unto the Lords family, is the doctrine of Salvation through free grace. They are indeed to dispense threatenings also, and to inculcate

culcate the terror of Gods wrath, *Mat. 3. 12.* Only their great design in all should be, that people may be thereby fitted to imbrace the offer of grace and salvation in the Gospel: for, the Apostle calleth that which he was to dispense, *the grace of God*, to wit, the doctrine of grace; *The dispensation of the grace of God.* 4. The Lords People ought carefully to lay up and remember what they hear of the Lords Word from, or of His dealing with, His Servants; that so they may make use of it afterwards, when God calleth them to it: and more especially they would not forget what may convincingly clear unto their consciences a Ministers calling, and his being sent from God unto them; whereby his doctrine, life, and sufferings may have the greater weight with them: for, *Paul* supposeth they did perfectly remember what they heard of his calling to the Gentiles, and therefore doth appeal to their testimony, while he saith, *If ye have heard of the dispensation, &c.* 5. As there is no lesse concredited unto called Ministers by God to hold forth unto the Lords People, than the doctrine of Salvation through free grace, the greatest of all trusts; So whatever is committed or given by God unto them, is not for themselves alone, but for the good of those also unto whom they are sent; and therefore God doth usually deal the better with Ministers for the Peoples sake: for, the relative, *which*, doth relate to the antecedent, *grace*, and *Paul* saith, *This grace*, or, the doctrine of the Gospel, *is given me to you-ward.*

Verf. 3. *How that by revelation he made known unto me the mysterie (as I wrote afore in few words,*

4 *Whereby when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mysterie of Christ.)*

THe Apostle, being (in the second branch of the first part of the Chapter to ver. 13.) more largely to illustrate what he did but briefly assert, ver. 2. to wit, that the Apostolick office of dispensing the Gospel to the

Gentiles was committed unto him, doth, first, shew, to ver. 7. that he was sufficiently furnished by God with knowledge and insight in the Doctrine of the Gospel concredited to him. And in those two verses he declareth, not only the nature of this Doctrine, that it is a *mysterie*, or sacred secret; but also, that it was made known unto him by God, together with the manner how he came to the knowledge of it, to wit, by extraordinary revelation from God, and not by ordinary means, as is more clearly expressed, *Gal. 1. 12.* and for proof of his knowledge and insight in this *mysterie*, he referreth them to what he hath written succinctly of it in the two former Chapters, in which he hath, by a most divine and ravishing strain, set forth the grounds, causes and means of salvation, and made application of all both to Jew and Gentile, which is the very comprehensive sum of this *mysterie*, ver. 3: from which two preceeding Chapters, being diligently perpended, and read by them, he doubteth not, but they should find he had not arrogantly, and without ground ascribed to himself a great measure of knowledge and insight in that *mysterie*, which he calleth *the mysterie of Christ*; because Christ is the chief subject of the Gospel, *1 Cor. 2. 2.* and the very *mysterie* of that *mysterie*, *1 Tim. 3. 16.* This is contained, ver. 4.

From ver. 3. *Learn, 1.* Whoever are called by God to undergo any office in His house, they are in some measure, greater or lesser, competently furnished and fitted by Him for that employment: And therefore giftlesse Ministers were never sent by God; for, *Paul*, having shown that the Apostolick Office was committed unto him by God, ver. 2. he now declareth how God had furnished him for it; *How that by revelation He made known unto me the mysterie.* 2. That the Gospel is a *mysterie*, and in what respects it is so, see chap. 1. ver. 9. doct. 1. *He made known unto me the mysterie.* 3. The Lord doth usually manifest Himself, more or lesse, unto His Servants, according to the nature, weight and difficulty of those
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employments unto which He doth call them : for, He maketh Himself manifest to *Paul* by extraordinary revelation, because he was to serve Him in an extraordinary embassy, as an Apostle ; *How that by revelation He made known unto me.* 4. As Christ's Ministers

may sometimes in sobriety speak to the commendation of their own knowledge, and of their other ministerial abilities, to wit, when they are necessitated to assert and avow their calling from God ; So it is most safe to speak no further to that purpose, than they have formerly given some proof of, in discharge of their calling, to which they may appeal, as an undeniable confirmation of what they affirm ; lest otherwise their bare assertion be taken for vain vaunting and arrogant boasting : for, *Paul*, being called to speak of his own knowledge and abilities, as an evidence of his calling from God, referreth them to that proof, which he had given thereof in his former writings, while he saith, *As I wrote afore in few words.* 5. The Doctrine of salvation revealed unto, and Preached by the Apostles, is contained in their writings, and therefore there is no necessity of unwritten traditions : for, the Apostle, proving that this mysterie was revealed to him, he doth not refer them to what he had preached unto them for the space of two years, *Acts* 19. 10. but to his writings, which had been no adequate proof, except he had written the sum of all which was revealed unto him, at least, of so much as was necessary for them to know ; *As I wrote afore in few words.* 6. The Spirit of God speaking in Scripture, hath comprised large and comprehensive purpose, even the whole plot of mans salvation, and the sum of mans duty, in a small bulk and few words ; as knowing, that reading much would be but wearisomenesse to the flesh,

Eccles. 12. - 12. and intending that the gift of interpretation and exponing Scripture, should have place in the Church, *1 Corinth.* 12. 8. for, *Paul*, the pen-man of the Spirit of God, giveth a comprehensive sum of the whole Gospel in the two first Chapters, with relation

to which, he saith here, *I wrote afore in few words.*

From ver. 4. *Learn*, 1. The brevity of Scripture, and comprehensive largeness of the purpose contained in it, do not occasion any such obscurity in Scripture, but by diligent reading the mind of God therein may be found out and understood: for, notwithstanding, *Paul* hath shown he had comprehended that whole mysterie in few words; yet, saith he, *Whereby when you read, ye may understand.* 2. The Word of God therefore ought to be frequently read, and diligently perused by all the Lords people; this being one mean, and second to none (except publick preaching, *Rom. 10. 14, 15.*) which the Lord doth blesse, as for other ends, So for attaining to know and understand the purpose and subject-matter contained in the Word: for, *Paul* supponeth it was their duty to read what he had written, and sheweth by reading they should *understand his knowledge in the mysterie.* 3. Even private Christians, through diligent reading of Scripture, may attain to such a measure of knowledge and understanding, as may enable them to judge of the abilities, gifts and doctrine of Ministers: for, *Paul*, speaking even to private Christians amongst those Ephesians, saith, *Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mysterie of Christ.* 4. Though private Christians are not to sift themselves as publick judges of the doctrine of Ministers, *1 Cor. 14. 32.* neither should they delight much in venting their private judgement, especially their carping censures, *Jam. 1. 19* yet they are not as stupid blocks, without triall and examination, to receive what-ever the Minister saith; but ought to passe a private judgment of discretion upon what they hear, whether it be truth or error, right or wrong, in so far, at least, as may regulate their own practice in choosing, or refusing what they hear, *1 Thess. 5. 21.* for, *Paul* alloweth unto those Ephesians to passe such a judgement upon his own doctrine and abilities; *Ye may understand my knowledge in the mysterie of Christ.*

Verf. 5. *Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit.*

THE Apostle giveth a reason, why he called the Gospel (the knowledge whereof was revealed unto him) *a mysterie*, and thereby doth also prove, that there was a necessity of extraordinary revelation for bringing him to the knowledge of it, to wit, because this Doctrine of salvation through free grace by Christ, and more especially the calling of the Gentiles to partake of this salvation in all respects equally with the Jews (which is chiefly intended by the *mysterie* here spoken of, as is clear from, ver. 6.) was not so fully, and clearly made known in the former ages of the world, unto any of the sons of men, whether without, or within the Church, as it was now under the Gospel revealed immediately by the Spirit of God unto the holy Apostles (who these were, see upon Col. 1. ver. 1. doct. 2.) and the Prophets of the New Testament. (spoken of, *Act. 15. 32. 21. 8, 9, 10. Eph. 4. 11.*) who being extraordinarily assisted by the Spirit of God, did not only open up the propheticall Scriptures of the Old Testament, confirming and proving the Doctrine of the Gospel from these; but also did foretell things to come. *Doct. 1.* The children of men are naturally ignorant of Gospel-truths, and know no further of them, than God is pleased to reveal and make known unto them: for, the Apostle sheweth, that the sons of men were passive, as to the measure of light which was attained unto of those truths; *Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed.* 2. The Lord in bestowing grace and the saving knowledge of Himself, doth act as a most free agent, not constrained by any necessity, so, that He dispenseth grace to whom He will, *Rom. 9. 18.* to some more sparingly, and to others more liberally, whether we compare times with times, or persons

persons with persons in one and the same time, *Rom. 12. -3.* for, He hath revealed the saving knowledge of this myserie now under the Gospel in a greater measure than he did formerly; *Which in other ages was not made known, as is now revealed,* saith he. 3. Neither the Doctrine of salvation through free grace by Christ, nor Gods purpose to call the Gentiles to partake of this salvation equally with the Jews, was altogether unknown to the ancient Church before Christ came; there being severall manifestations of the former in the Covenant of Grace, as it was first revealed unto *Adam, Gen. 3. 15.* and after renewed with *Abraham, Gen. 17. 7.* *David, 2 Sam. 23. 5.* and commented upon by the Prophets, *Isa. 53. 3.* &c. and many full prophecies also of the latter, which the Apostles themselves did make use of to confirm the calling of the Gentiles, as *Act. 13. 47.* cited from *Isa. 49. 6.* and *Act. 15. 15.* cited from *Amos 9. 11:* for, the Apostle doth not simply deny that the former ages had any knowledge of this myserie at all, but comparatively; *It was not in other ages made known, as it is now revealed.* But, fourthly, neither the Doctrine of salvation, nor yet the calling of the Gentiles were so fully, or clearly revealed under the Old Testament, as they are now under the New; both of them being but sparingly spoken to then, *Mat. 13. 17.* and what was spoken, for the most part, wrapped up in a vail of types and shadowes, so that they could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished, *2 Cor. 3. 13.* The latter, to wit, the calling of the Gentiles, being only then fore-told, and prophesied of; and therefore could not be so distinctly, solidly and satisfyingly known, as now when it is accomplished: Besides that the time when, and the manner how it was to be accomplished, and particularly, that the Gentiles should have access unto the Church without an entrance by the door of circumcision. Those (I say) were either not at all, or but very sparingly revealed, so that even the Apostles themselves, after Christs ascension, did doubt and hesitate much

much about the truth of this myſterie, untill it was more fully revealed, *Act. 10. 10, &c.* for, ſaith *Paul*, Which in other ages was not made known, as it is now revealed. 5. As Chriſts ſervants may be ſometimes neceſſitated to ſpeak unto the commendation of their own receipts from God; So Chriſtian ſobriety will teach them to be ſo far from diſparaging, or undervaluing the receipts of others, to render themſelves thereby the more eſteemed of, That they will endeavour to have others, who are equally deſerving, to partake with them in that deſerved eſteem, which they challenge unto themſelves: for, *Paul*, having begun to ſpeak (*ver. 3.*) of that knowledge of this myſterie, which was revealed unto himſelf, doth here affirm the ſame of all the Apoſtles and Prophets; *As it is now revealed unto the Apoſtles and Prophets.* 6. Though God might eaſily communicate the knowledge of Himſelf unto all, whom he intendeth to ſave in a way extraordinary, immediately and without the help of ſecond means, *Act. 2. ver. 3, 4.* yet, He hath rather choſen to communicate His mind ſo, unto ſome few only, who have, ſome of them, at leaſt, at His appointment (*2 Pet. 1. - 21.*) ſet down in ſacred Writ what they themſelves did immediately receive from God, *1 Job. 1. 1.* by which means the knowledge of God may, in an ordinary way, be conveyed unto others, *Job. 20. 31.* The Lord hereby preventing Satans deſigne, who would otherwiſe have obtruded upon people his own deluſions, in place of immediate revelations from God, *2 Chron. 18. 21.* and trying the obedience of His people, if they will ſubject themſelves unto His will and word in the mouth of His Servants, *Matth. 10. 40.* as alſo gently ſparing their infirmity and weakneſſe, who could not, one among a thouſand, carry aright thoſe extraordinary manifeſtations of God unto their ſpirits, *2 Cor. 12. 7.* for, ſaith *Paul*, this myſterie was revealed by the Spirit, to wit, immediately, not unto all, but to His holy Apoſtles and Prophets. 7. As all the Lords Miniſters ought to be inherently holy, nor only

only because of the precept enjoining so much in a special manner unto Ministers, *Tit. 1. 8.* but also for the more successfull discharging of their office; seeing the secret of the Lord is with them who fear Him, *Psal. 25. 14.* and the lips of the righteous feed many, *Prov. 10. 21.* and as all the extraordinary Office-bearers (for what is revealed, *Judas* alone excepted) and Pen-men of holy Scripture, were really sanctified and holy; So inherent holinesse, without a peculiar illumination of the Spirit of God, superadded for that end, is not sufficient for giving clear light and insight in Gospel-mysteries: for, He giveth the Apostles and Prophets the epithet of *holy*, to shew they themselves were so, and all Ministers ought to be so; and yet this mysterie behoved to be revealed unto them by the Spirit, even to the *holy Apostles and Prophets.*

Verf. 6. That the Gentiles should be fellow-beirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ, by the Gospel.

THE Apostle doth here give a brief sum of that mystery, which was revealed unto him, as to that part of it, at least, which was most controverted, to wit, that the Pagan Gentiles were now called to enjoy, and real Believers among them actually did enjoy most excellent priviledges. As, first, of being joynt-heirs of the heavenly inheritance with the Believers of the Jewish Nation, *Gal. 3. 29.* and with Christ Himself, *Rom. 8. 17.* Secondly, of being incorporated with the Church of God in one mysticall body, whereof Christ is the Head. See, upon *Eph. 1. 22, 23.* And, thirdly, of partaking with the believing Jews of the Covenant-promise made by God to *Abraham* and his seed, *Gen. 17. 7.* so that they were now within the bond of the Covenant of Grace. He declareth also, that all those priviledges were purchased for them, and freely bestowed upon them by Christ, and by vertue of their being in Him

Him by faith, in whom they had equal interest with the believing Jews themselves; and that they were brought to this happy estate by the alone-preaching of the Gospel, and by faith in it, without the ceremoniall Law and Circumcision. All which were mysteries to the ancient Church. See upon ver. 5. *Dott. 4.* Hence, *Learn, 1.* There is a necessary concatenation among those three, to wit, a right to heaven, union with Christ's mysticall body, and saving interest in the Covenant of Grace. The enjoying of any one whereof, implyeth the other two: and if one of those be wanting, the rest are wanting also: for, the Apostle speaketh of them, as mutually depending one upon another; *That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, &c.* 2. As every renewed childe of God is an heir of the heavenly inheritance; So the multitude of heirs doth not lessen the inheritance, nor make the priviledge of being an heir of heaven the lesse glorious; yea, it addeth unto the glory of it: for, he placeth a great part of their priviledge in this, not simply, that they were heirs, but *fellow-heirs.* 3. It is a great and glorious priviledge to be a part of that mysticall body, whereof Christ is Head; and that because of the strict union, which such have with Christ (See, ver. 17.) and with all Believers in Christ, *Eph. 2. 15.* and because of that influence of life and spirit, which, being in Christ without measure, *Job. 3. 34.* is communicated unto them, every one in his own measure; *Eph. 4. 16.* as also because of their interest in all the common priviledges of that body, *Rom. 8. 30.* and in the gifts and graces of every member thereof, *1 Cor. 3. 22.* for, Paul speaketh of this, as an excellent priviledge bestowed on the Gentiles under the new Testament, even *that they should be of the same body.* 4. It is a priviledge no lesse great and glorious, to have saving interest in the Covenant of Grace and the promises thereof; for, thereby we have access to both the former priviledges; and all the saving blessings of that Covenant, comprised in the many large precious, and comprehensive promises

misses thereof, do become ours : for, the Apostle speaketh of this , as of another excellent priviledge bestowed upon the Gentiles , even , *that they should be partakers of His promise.* 5. As Jesus Christ hath purchased all those glorious priviledges and saving blessings, to which the people of God can lay any claim , or interest ; So there is no actuall enjoyment of any part of His purchase , except by those who are savingly in Christ, and united to Him by faith : for, this expression, *in Christ*, speaketh both that those things were purchased by Him, and were enjoyed by their being in Him ; *partakers of His promise in Christ.* 6. The Gospel (especially when it is preached by a sent Minister , *Rom. 10. 15.*) is a powerfull mean , through Gods blessing , for gaining ground upon most desperate sinners , and for prevailing with them to close by faith with Christ, as He is offered ; by vertue whereof their state is changed, and they made holy , happy and blessed : for, the Gentiles , whose desperate case in time past was set forth , Chap. 2. 12. are now made *fellow-heirs of one body, partakers of His promise in Christ*, or being united to Him, and this all by the Gospel.

Verf. 7. Whereof I was made a Minister , according to the gift of the grace of God, given unto me, by the effectual working of His power.

THe Apostle, having in the preceeding verses declared how he had attained a large measure of knowledge and insight in the mysterie of the Gospel, doth now (in further enlargement of what he did but briefly assert, ver. 2.) shew, that he was called by God to undergo the Apostolick Office of dispensing that mysterie, and doth joyntly extol and magnifie his Office, from eight distinct considerations, to ver. 13.

And in this verse , having asserted his calling from God to be a Minister of the Gospel unto the Gentiles, he doth magnifie this his Office, as also make it appear, that

that he was called to it, first, from the gifts both ordinary and extraordinary, which he was furnished with in the discharging of it. And, secondly, from the powerful assistance of Gods Spirit, enabling him to exercise those gifts, notwithstanding of many difficulties, and giving admirable successe to his Ministry both far and near, *Rom.* 15. 19. 20. All which, to wit, his calling, gifts, and divine assistance, he doth ascribe to Gods grace and free favour. *Doct.* 1. The very Apostolick Office it self, was no lordly dominion, or place of honour and ease; but a laborious ministry and service, wherein the person intrusted, was to bestir himself to the utmost of his activity and diligence, for the honour of Christ and good of His Church: for, the word rendred *Minister*, which *Paul* here taketh unto himself, doth signifie a painfull, vehement labour, as those who make hast in travell, raising the dust by their celerity and speed; *Whereof I was made a Minister*, saith he. 2. It is not sufficient warrant for any to meddle with the ministerial Office, that he hath competent gifts fitting him for it, except he have also ministerial power and authority conveyed unto him, either immediately by God, as it was in the calling of the Apostles, *Gal.* 1. 1. or, mediately, according to that order which God hath established in His Church, as is in the calling of ordinary Ministers, *Act.* 14. 23. for, *Paul* distinguisheth these two, his being sufficiently furnished with the knowledge of the Gospel, whereof he spoke from ver. 3. and his authority and power to preach the Gospel unto others, of which he speaketh here, while he saith, *Whereof I was made a Minister*. 3. Though ability and gifts be not that which maketh a man a called Minister, as said is; yet when men, being otherwise orderly called, are competently furnished with gifts and enduements, and are accompanied with the influence of Gods blessing upon the exercise of their parts, it is a speaking evidence and confirmation of their calling from God, not only unto themselves, but also unto others who would otherwise possibly doubt of it: for,

for, *Paul* doth not only magnifie his office, but also make it evident that he was called to it from these two, while he saith, *I am made a Minister according to the gift bestowed on me*, and by, or, as it is in the Original, *according to the effectual working of His power*. 4. As it is required to make a man a Minister, that he be endued with competent abilities and gifts for that imployment; So it is no lesse requisite that God do concur with him; otherwise he cannot exercise his gift, and make use of it for the good of others, *2 Cor. 3. 5.* or, though he exercise it, yet all his utmost endeavours will be fruitlesse and without successe among the people, *1 Cor. 3. 6.* for, *Paul* sheweth besides the gift which he received of grace, God did also concur with him; *According to the gift of the grace of God, by the effectuall working of His power*. 5. Though the Lord give competency of gifts unto all whom He calleth, yet He giveth not unto all one and the same gift, or in the same measure; but to some a greater, to others a lesser, as He hath more or lesse to do with them: for, as *Paul* was singularly imployed; so he had a singular gift, and therefore he saith, *the gift of the grace given to me*, thereby implying there was somewhat singular in his gift. 6. So great and many are those difficulties which Ministers have often to wrestle with, what from without, and what from within, before they can attain to freedom and boldnesse in exercising their ministerial gift, *Gal. 4. 13, 14.* So difficult is it also to gain ground upon hearts by the ministry of the Word, *2 Cor. 10. -4, 5.* that no lesse is required, either for the one or the other, than the power of God, His working power, and working effectually with a kind of pith and energie: for, *Paul's* necessity called for no lesse, even *the effectual working of His power*. 7. As it is no small grace and favour from God for any to be imployed in the ministerial Calling, and competently furnished with gifts and parts for that imployment, and to have their labours blessed with successe in gaining many souls to God; So a gracious Minister will be ready

at all occasions to acknowledge grace in all these, ascribing all to Gods favour, and His powerfull working in him, and by him, and not to his own dignity, diligence, or parts: for, so doth Paul here; *Whereof I was made a Minister, according to the gift of the grace of God.*

Verf. 8. *Unto me, who am lesse than the least of all Saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

THe Apostle doth extoll and magnifie his Office, thirdly, from the consideration of his own unworthinesse, which was so great, by reason, especially, of his enmity to Christ and the Christian Church, while he was unconverted, 1 Tim. i. 13. that to his own apprehension, and for what he knew of himself and others, he was more unworthy, and lesse to be esteemed of, than the meanest of Gods children and Saints: and yet the Apostolick office (called here *grace*, because it did flow from Gods favour and grace) was bestowed upon him. And, fourthly, from the excellency of the subject matter, which he was engaged, by vertue of his Office, to preach and set forth unto the Gentiles, even *the unsearchable riches of Christ*, under which is comprehended the whole Doctrine of the Gospel, wherein are contained such things relating to Christ in His Person, Natures and Offices, and to the benefits of Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, of grace here, and of glory hereafter, purchased by Him, and bestowed upon the Elect; and such things also relating to His manifold wisdom manifested in His various dispensation to His Church in severall ages, as are not only hid to naturall men, but also above the reach of all created understanding (even though renewed by grace) to comprehend them fully in this life, untill we see as we are seen, 1 Cor. 13. 12. All which things are here called *riches*, not only because of that unsearchable abundance, and worth, which are in the things themselves, but also be-

cause they make the Elect (to whom they are offered, and upon whom they are bestowed) truly rich, *Rev.* 3. 18- and possessors of all things, even though they have nothing, *2 Cor.* 6. -10. *Doct.* 1. Though whensoever a sinner doth turn to God, all his sins are freely pardoned, and in that respect forgotten, and past over by God as if they had never been, *Ezek.* 18. 21, 22. yet the pardoned sinner himself should not forget, but so far keep them in memory, as he may be thereby kept humble, and little in his own eyes, so long as he liveth: for, *Paul* did so much remember his bypast, and pardoned blasphemies, as that he accounteth himself *lesse than the least of all Saints.* 2. Growth in grace, and increase in humility, and in low esteem of a mans self, do usually go together, so, that most eminent Christians, considering what they have been before conversion, (*1 Cor.* 15. 9.) and what they yet are, because of the remnants of sin dwelling in them, (*Rom.* 7. 18.) should and will judge themselves the least of all Saints, according to that deep insight and sense which they have of their own sins, being compared with the remote view, which they take of the sins of others, *Rom.* 14. 10. for, so doth *Paul* judge of himself from those grounds; *unto me, who am lesse than the least of all Saints.* 3. Sense of sin, and of self-unworthinesse, ought so to abase and humble the childe of God, as not to make him question, far lesse deny, that God hath any saving work in him; this latter not being true humility, but sinfull ingratitude, which frequently hath its rise from an unmortified root of crushed pride, though it pretend to great humility; for, *Paul* abaseth himself, and yet insinuateth that he is a Saint, while he saith, *I am lesse than the least of all Saints.* 4. As all Saints are not of one standing and size, but some greater, some lesser, and some lesse than the least, except themselves; So it is no small honour and dignity to be among the least of Saints, and to have a work of saving grace, though but in the meanest degree; seeing even the meanest of Saints have a choise room in Gods heart

heart, *Psal. 40. 17.* for, while he saith, *I am the least of all Saints*, he declareth he thought it an honour to have any room among them. 5. Deep sense of sin, and of self-unworthinesse in a childe of God, do well consist with a confident pleading for, and avowing of an interest in, yea, with admiration at, and extolling of the riches of Gods mercy and free grace towards such an unworthy wretch, as he is: for, both these were in *Paul*; unto me, *who am lesse than the least of all Saints*, is this grace given. 6. The Lord in deepest wisdom doth often bestow the rarest gifts and graces upon such, as by reason of their former wickednesse, are most conscious to themselves of their own unworthinesse: yea, and sometimes will employ them in most eminent pieces of His service, as knowing such have somewhat to keep them humble, and make them ascribe the glory of what they do unto God, *1 Cor. 15. 9, 10.* whereas others would readily take the glory unto themselves, being puffed up with their gifts and successe, and so should fall in the condemnation of the devil, *1 Tim. 3. 6.* for, Gods dealing with *Paul*, in giving him such excellent gifts, and the Apostolick office from grace, proveth so much; unto me, *who am lesse than the least of all Saints*, is this grace given. 7. The more unworthy that any is, upon whom the Lord bestoweth grace, and sheweth mercy, the glory of His grace is so much the more set forth, and shineth the more brightly: whileas where sin hath abounded, grace doth much more abound, *Rom. 5. 20.* for, *Paul* commendeth the dignity of his calling, and the worth of that grace, by which he was called to that office, from his own basenesse and unworthinesse; unto me, *who am lesse than the least of all Saints*, is this grace given. 8. It concerneth a Minister much, as to be deeply affected with the sense of his own unworthinesse; so, seriously and frequently to ponder the weight and dignity of that trust, which is put upon him, and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints, the dispensing whereof, is committed unto

him; that so with greater fear and reverence, care and diligence he may take heed to his Ministry, which he hath received in the Lord, to fulfill it, *Col. 4. 17.* for, *Paul* considereth also the worth of that message, which he was intrusted with, while he saith, *that I should preach the unspeakable riches of Christ.* 9. Though others of the Apostles besides *Paul*, were intrusted to carry the Gospel unto the Gentiles; yet considering, that he was so fully instructed in the knowledge of this myserie of the rejection of the Jews, and calling of the Gentiles, *ver. 3.* and *Rom. 11.* and had a perpetuall conflict with the Jews, through the whole course of his life in the defence of this truth, as is clear from the *Acts* of the Apostles: as also that he hath committed more unto sacred Writing to this purpose for the use and benefit chiefly of the Gentiles, than any of the other Apostles, Therefore is it that *Paul* doth seem to have been intrusted in a peculiar manner with the charge of preaching the Gospel unto, and being the Apostle of, the Gentiles, which appeareth, as from other places, *Act. 26. 17, 18.* *1 Tim. 2. 7.* so from this, *unto me, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles.* 10. Offices, and competencie of gifts for discharging any office, are given of God to those who have them, and especially to Ministers, not to keep them without use-making, *Matth. 25. 27.* or, to make use of them only for gaining applause, or advantage to themselves, *2 Cor. 4. 5.* but that they may employ them for the glory of God, and the good of others: for, this grace was given to *Paul*, *that he might preach among the Gentiles.* 11. As *Jesus Christ*, with all that rich store and copious abundance of created graces and divine perfections which are in Himself, and of satisfactory fulnesse which is in those many good things purchased by Him, should be the main subject of a Ministers preaching, whatever he preacheth besides of leagall threatnings or duties, being made to relate some one way or other unto Him; So *Jesus Christ* and the riches of the Gospel, are so large a field and subject, that the
most

most gracious and able Ministers will find daily purpose and fresh matter furnished of new, whereof to preach concerning it; yea, and never will be able to go through it: for, *Paul* made Christ and the Gospel the main subject of his preaching, and did find them unsearchable; *that I should preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.* 12. Though those hid treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Christ, and the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints, and of all those other good things purchased by Him, and offered in the Gospel, go beyond the reach of all created understanding to know them fully; yet it is the duty both of Pastors and people to search into them; there being as much knowledge of those unsearchable riches attainable, even here, as may encourage all to search, *Hof. 6. 4.* and nothing being more sweet upon earth, than to be swallowed up, and overwhelmed in this deep and bottomlesse gulf of the unsearchable riches of Christ, when penury of thoughts, and want of enlarged hearts to comprehend that incomprehensible subject, necessitate the soul sometimes to succumb under the weight, to stand still, wonder and exclaim, *O the depth of the riches, &c! Rom. 11. 33.* for, though those riches are unsearchable; yet *Paul* did search in them, for he preached them, and consequently, they to whom he preached, were obliged to search into them also; *That I should preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

Verf. 9. And to make all men see, what is the fellowship of the mystrie, which from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.

HE doth here, first, more fully expresse what he presently spoke of his preaching among the Gentiles, as also extoll and magnifie his office, fifthly, from the great good and benefit, which was by his conscientious discharge thereof to accresse unto men, even the

making evident unto all men, without any such distinction of nations or persons, as was kept under the Ministry of the Old Testament, (*Gal. 3. 28.*) what that mystrie of the union and association of Jews and Gentiles in one body was, whereby they have joynt interest in the Covenant of Grace, in Christ the Cautioner, and in all those spirituall blessings purchased by Him. Next, he giveth a reason why he called this communion and fellowship a *mystrie*, and secret; because it was a thing hid, untill the times of the Apostles, in Gods decree, and not revealed, at least, so fully and clearly, as then it was, (*See, ver. 5. doct. 4.*) and having made mention of God, he describeth Him from His work of creating all things by Jesus Christ, the eternal word of the Father, *Joh. 1. 1.* and this most appositely to the present purpose, to wit, the calling of the Gentiles; as intending hereby to shew, that none hath reason to wonder, why God should save the Gentiles as well as the Jews by Christ; seeing He hath equal interest in them, as having created them both, and that by Christ. *Doct. 1.* Though the Lords Ministers ought mainly to labour upon the affections of people, endeavouring to work them up to such a frame and temper, as the Word of God doth call for, *2 Tim. 4. 2.* yet, this also is a considerable part of the ministerial task, which they would endeavour in the first place, and in order to their more effectuall and orderly moving of the affections, even to make the Lords people understand the mind of God revealed in Scripture, as well concerning their sin and misery, as the remedy thereof held forth in the Gospel, *Act. 2. 22, 23, 38, 39.* and therefore they would affect great plainnesse of speech, dimitting themselves, so far as is possible, unto the capacity of the meanest: For, *Paul* sheweth that the information of the judgement, was that which he endeavoured with the first in the discharge of his Ministry; *And to make all men see,* saith he. 2. The Word preached by sent Ministers, is the Lords ordinary mean and instrument, by which he conveyeth

conveyeth the saving knowledge of Gospel-truths unto the Elect: and that both by making these truths evident and plain; that so they may be known, being otherwise hid, *Col. 4. 4.* and by opening the eyes of their understanding, that they may see, being otherwise blind, *Act. 26. 18.* for, the Lord imployed Paul in the ministeriall calling, *To make all men see, what is the fellowship, &c.* The word signifieth both to make a thing evident, that it may be seen, and to give an inward principle of knowledge unto men, by vertue whereof they may see. 3. The commission given by Christ unto His Servants to preach the Gospel under the New Testament, is not astricted unto the Jews only, as it was before Christ came in the flesh, yea and after His incarnation before the midle-wall of partion between Jew and Gentile was removed by His death, *Matth. 10. 5.* But it is extended indifferently to all nations under heaven, and to all persons without exception, as God by His providence shall open a door unto His Servants to go unto them: for, so is Paul's commission here to be understood, even, *to make all men see.* 4. That sinners, lost by nature, may attain to fellowship and communion with the true Church of God, by sharing with them in all their priviledges and good things purchased by Christ, and in Christ Himself, the Covenant of Grace, and in all the prayers, gifts and graces of all Believers through the world, is the gladdest tydings that ever sounded in their ears: for, Paul, having shewn (ver. 8.) that his office was to preach (or, as it is in the Original, to declare good tydings) to the Gentiles, he sheweth here what those glad tydings are, even, *to make them see, what is the fellowship of the mysterie,* that is, what that fellowship is, which they were now admitted unto with the true Church of God in all her priviledges, and formerly was an hid secret. 5. The written Word of God is such a depth, that the quickest wits cannot find the bottom of it; there being many things contained in it, at least by just consequence, which

even they, who have their senses exercised in it, cannot thoroughly discern or collect from it: for, even this myſterie, that the Gentiles ſhould have fellowſhip with the Church, without entring by the door of Circumciſion, was revealed, though obſcurely, in the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, as *Paul* doth gather by conſequence from the time of *Abraham's* Circumciſion, *Rom.* 4. 10, 11. and from *Melchizedeck's* Prieſthood, *Heb.* 7. 11. and yet, ſaith the Apoſtle, *this was a myſterie, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God.* So that even the Prophets did not fully underſtand it, nor the Apoſtles themſelves untill it was more clearly revealed, *Acts* 10. 10.

6. *Jeſus Chriſt* is true God, equal with the Father in power and glory, having an eternal being before the world was made: for, the Father *created all things by Jeſus Chriſt*, to wit, not as by one inſtrument, but as one working with Him, and from Him, *Heb.* 1. 2. *Joh.* 1. 3.

7. Though the grace of Redemption be not of equal extent with the work of Creation, there being many created, whom God will never ſave, *Matth.* 7. 21. yet, Gods equal intereſt in all by creation, doth abundantly plead His liberty to ſave whom He pleaſeth, and to ſave one as well as another, whatever a ſpirit of envy in ſome may ſay to the contrary: for, the Apoſtle's ſcope in ſaying God *created all things by Jeſus Chriſt*, is, to ſhew, that none could juſtly ſtumble at God's ſaving the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, ſeing He had equal intereſt in both by creation.

8. The conſideration of Chriſt's God-head, and of His creating all things, doth contribute much to the faith and right underſtanding of His diſcharging the mediatory Office, in uniting all the Eleſt to God, and among themſelves; in ſo far as this conſideration doth hold Him forth to be one fitted and enabled to do what is undertaken, and ſpeaketh His intereſt in them as His creatures, and right to ſave them, if He pleaſe: for, that *Paul* may further clear this purpoſe of uniting Jew and Gentile in one by Chriſt, he mentioneth God's *creating all things by Chriſt* as God equall with Himſelf.

Verſ.

Verſ. 10. *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold wiſdom of God.*

THe Apoſtle doth magnifie his office, ſixty, from the advantage and benefit, which did thereby redound unto the glorified Angels, called here *principalities and powers*, chiefly, becauſe God maketh uſe of their Miniſterie in governing the kingdomes and principalities of this world, *Dan. 4. 13, 14.* and, *10. 13, 13.* and becauſe of the force and power they have in executing the will of God, *Pſal. 103. 20.* and are ſaid to be *in heavenly places*, not as if they were never upon earth, *Gen. 32. 1.* but the place of their ordinary reſidence is in heaven, *Matth. 18. 10.* Now, the Apoſtle ſheweth, that this was one end intended by God to be brought about by his preaching the Goſpel unto the Gentiles, even, that the Church, being hereby gathered of Jew and Gentile, might be as a glaſſe, wherein theſe glorious creatures ſhould behold *the manifold wiſdom of God*, that is, the many and ſignall evidences of Gods infinite wiſdom maniſeſted in the way of ſalvation held forth by the Goſpel, *1 Corinth. 1. 24.* and in His diſverſe wayes of diſpenſing grace and ſalvation in ſeveral ages, *Heb. 1. 1.* (the Doctrine of ſalvation remaining alwayes the ſame for ſubſtance, *Heb. 13. 8.*) and more eſpecially, as to the preſent purpoſe, in His receiving the formerly profane and idolatrous Gentiles unto fellowſhip and ſociety with His Church, having aboliſhed Circumciſion and the reſt of thoſe leuiticall Ordinances: which is the main ſubject of all that preceedeth this Verſe in this Chapter. *Doct. 1.* The glory of free grace, mercy, wiſdom and of other divine attributes, which God intendeth in the ſalvation of ſinners, is ſuch a rent, as He will have payed, not only by men, but alſo by the glorified Angels: for, *Paul* maketh this one end, why God gave him the Goſpel to preach, even that Angels might therein

therein see Gods glory made manifest, and might acknowledge it accordingly; *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers.* 2. It is the dutie of Christs Ministers to commend and magnifie their Office, not for gaining praise and esteem to themselves, 2 *Cor.* 3. 1. but that the malice of Satan and his instruments may be hereby frustrated, 2 *Cor.* 11. 12. who labour to bring that sacred Calling unto contempt; that so it may have the lesse of successe upon peoples hearts, 2 *Tim.* 3. 8. for therefore is it that *Paul* doth so much magnifie his Office in this and the preceeding Verses; *To the intent, that now unto the principalities and powers, &c.* 3. This may commend the Ministers of the Gospel not a little unto men, and beget reverence in them towards the same, that even the blessed Angels are in some sort bettered by it, and that it is therefore respected by them: for, *Paul* commendeth his Office from this, that by occasion thereof *unto the principalities and powers, was made known the manifold wisdom of God.* 4. Though Angels be most knowing creatures, as enjoying the immediate sight and presence of God, *Matth.* 18. 10. yet they are ignorant of some things, which, by Gods way of dispensing the Gospel to His Church, they come to a more full knowledge of: and therefore, though their present state of happinesse doth give them full satisfaction for the time; yet it is capable of some addition, and to be perfected fully at the last day, even as the torments of the fallen Angels shall then, and not while then be compleat, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. for, *Paul* sheweth that by the Church was made known the manifold wisdom of God. 5. Neither the souls of just men made perfect, nor glorified Angels, though they enjoy the blessed sight of God, do yet by vertue thereof come to the knowledge of every thing, which God Himself doth know; and therefore it is without ground affirmed by Papists, that by this mean they know the prayers, which are uttered here on earth: for, the Apostle, sheweth that even the blessed Angels are ignorant of some things, untill *by the Church was made known*
unto

unto them the manifold wisdom of God. 6. Though the wise and eternall counsell of God for bringing lost sinners to glory, be one and the same, and wholly unchangeable, *Psal.* 33. 11. and though the way condescended upon in that His eternall counsell, by which sinners shall be saved, hath been in all ages one and the same for substance, to wit, Jesus Christ, *Heb.* 13. 8. and faith in Him; *Heb.* 11. 2. Yet, so many and diverse are those wayes, wherein He doth execute that counsell in the severall ages of His Church, *Heb.* 1. 1. and all of them fitted for the age of the Church, which then was, *Gal.* 4. 3. So unworthy (*2 Cor.* 4. 7.) and contrary (*Philip.* 1. 19) are those means for the most part, whereby He worketh the end intended; So sweet an harmony and concord betwixt infinit mercy and infinit justice, doth appear in this way, each of those rejoycing over the other, and yet ceding one to another, to the full satisfaction of both, *Rom.* 3. 24. 26. So variously and wonderfully doth he confound the wisdom of men and devils, who would mar the salvation of the Elect by making them (nill they will they) to advance it, *Philip.* 1. 12. And generally all His way is such, that (as it evidenceth infinit wisdom in God, who hath contrived, and doth manage it; So) it containeth many evidences of that kind: for, therefore is that, which the Angels do learn from the way of salvation revealed to the Church, and God's way of carrying on His people's salvation, called *the manifold wisdom of God.* 7. Then do we learn the knowledge of Scripture, and observe Gods way of dealing in carrying on our own salvation and the salvation of others aright, when we observe in Gods Word, or works His manifold wisdom, or some evident proof of His other attributes: for, this was it which the Angels did learn from Gods mind revealed in Scripture, and His way of dealing with the Church, even *the manifold wisdom of God.*

Verf. 11. According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

HE magnifieth his Office, seventhly, by shewing, first, that the making manifest this manifold wisdom of God, in the dispensation of grace both to Jew and Gentiles by his Ministry, was a thing which God (who worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will, chap. 1. 11.) had resolved upon, and purposed, not of yesterday, but from all eternity, though for wise reasons he did reserve the making of so much known until the times of the Gospel. Next, that this eternal purpose, was purposed in Christ, to wit, not only as He was God equall with, and the eternal wisdom, of the Father, and so did joyn with Him in all His decrees and purposes; but also, as Mediator, God-man, by whom the Father was to effectuate and execute all His purposes for good towards the Church. See upon Chap. 1. ver. 4. for, the word rendered *purposed*, may be also rendered, *He made*, or, *did execute in Christ*. *Doct. 1.* This may commend the Ministry of the Gospel, and gain respect unto it, that the plot and draught of mans salvation dispensed thereby, is founded upon the wise and eternal counsel of God; and therefore such as will endure all the contradictions of sinners, *2 Sam. 23. 5.* yea, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against, *Matth. 7. 24, 25.* and self-condemned sinners may safely venture their salvation upon, *Matth. 11. 28.* for, *Paul* doth magnifie his Office from this, that the message which he carried, *was according to Gods eternal purpose.* 2. This may also, upon the same grounds, commend the Ministry of the Gospel much, that Jesus Christ, being chosen by the Father for that end, hath taken-on, and doth daily execute His mediatory Office for bringing about the salvation of the Elect, according to the plot condescended upon in Gods eternal purpose, and dispensed by the Ministry of the Gospel: for, *Paul* commendeth his Ministry from this, that

that God had *purposed*, and resolved upon that draught of salvation, in *Jesus Christ our Lord*. 3. As God before all time hath fore-ordained in His eternal purpose whatever cometh to passe in time, His works being known unto Him, and accordingly resolved upon by Him, before the worlds were made, *Act. 15. 18*. So, though Gods way of dealing in time with men, and more particularly with His Church, doth alter; yet this inferreth not any change or alteration in His purpose, seeing every dispensation remaineth so long as He hath purposed, and every alteration falleth out according to His purpose: for, lest from what the Apostle spoke of Gods manifold wisdom in dispensing grace and salvation now, in a way diverse from what He did formerly, any should suspect, that therefore God had altered His purpose, he sheweth here all this had come to passe *according to His eternal purpose*.

4. As it is but small comfort unto a Minister, that he is intrusted to carry unto others an excellent message and glad tydings of the plot and draught of mans salvation surely grounded upon Gods purpose, and infallibly executed by Christ in all its steps; except he make application, and take a share of those glad tydings unto himself; So the way for either Pastor or People to apply the Gospel, and all those rich treasures of spiritual blessings contained in it unto themselves, is, by taking hold upon Christ, and pleading a well-grounded interest in Him as theirs: for, if Christ be ours, all things are ours, *Rom, 8. 32*. Hence is it that Paul, having magnified his Ministry and Message, doth make application of those precious things which he was intrusted with, unto himself, by pleading an interest in Christ, as his, while he calleth Him *Jesus Christ our Lord*.

Verſ. 12. *In whom we have boldneſſe and acceſſe with confidence by the faith of Him.*

HE doth magnifie his Office, eighthly, from three excellent priviledges, whereof Believers among them (ſome in a greater, ſome in a leſſer meaſure, ſome at one time, ſome at another) did partake by the means of his Miniſtery; as being thereby brought to Chriſt, in whom they enjoyed all theſe. 1. *Boldneſſe*, or liberty to ſpeak all their mind freely (as the original word doth bear) whereby, as it is diſtinguiſh'd from the other two, is meant that holy freedom and boldneſſe, which is in reconciled ſouls to ſpeak their whole heart to God, both in the duty of prayer and thankſgiving, and is oppoſed to miſbelief, terror of conſcience, or to whatſoever doth ſtraiten the heart, or ſtop the mouth in diſcharging theſe duties. 2. *Acceſſe*, to wit, unto God, (See chap. 2. 18.) which is larger than the former, as comprehending freedom and liberty of ſpirit in reconciled ſouls to exerciſe all their ſaving graces, in the exerciſe whereof communion with God doth conſiſt. 3. *Confidence*, or a well-grounded perſwaſion, that both our perſons and performances are accepted of God. All which priviledges he ſheweth were enjoyed by them by vertue of their being in Chriſt, of whom he ſpoke, ver. 11. and by the exerciſe of faith relying upon Him. *Doct.* 1. Whatſoever worldly diſadvantage may follow upon the preaching of the Goſpel unto a People, *Matth. 10. 34, 35.* yet, thoſe excellent and ſpiritual priviledges which are conveyed thereby unto them who receive the Goſpel, may and ought ſufficiently commend the Miniſtery of it unto all: for, *Paul* doth here commend his Office from theſe ſpiritual fruits which were enjoyed by it, as their being in Chriſt, in whom they had boldneſſe, and acceſſe with confidence. 2. And more particularly, liberty and freedom to ſpeak our heart to God in all our concerns; and acceſſe to God, or fellowſhip with Him in the exerciſe of

of all our graces (all obstructions arising either from the apprehension of Gods terror, and our own guiltinesse ; or from our inability, backwardnesse of spirit to good ; or, from those impediments which the devil, the world, or our own hearts do create and cast in our way, being removed) Those, I say, together with confidence, and a well-grounded perswasion that both our persons and duties are accepted of by God, may and will abundantly serve to commend the Ministry of the Gospel unto those who have found it accompanied with such effects to their own hearts, whatever other troubles they may be under for their receiving of it : for, the Apostle commendeth his Ministry from their enjoying of those priviledges in particular by the means thereof ; *In whom we have boldnesse, &c.* 3. The more a Christian doth find his heart enlarged, and his tongue loosed to speak unto God in the duties of prayer and praise, he will find the more of accessse unto, and of fellowship with, God in the exercise of all His saving graces ; and the more a man be restrained of liberty in those duties, he will readily find himself the more restrained from the exercise of faith, hope, patience, humility, meeknesse, or any other of His saving graces : for, the Apostle conjoyneth *boldnesse*, or liberty in prayer and praises, with *accessse*, or freedom of spirit to approach unto God in the exercise of saving graces ; *In whom we have boldnesse and accessse.* 4. A well-grounded perswasion of our acceptation with God, both as to our persons and actions, doth serve exceedingly to furnish the heart with boldnesse in prayer, and with familiar accessse unto, and fellowship with God ; in so far as a great many of those obstructions, which mar boldnesse and accessse, do arise from diffidence, misbelieving doubts, or ignorance whether God accepteth of us or not, *Rom. 10. 14.* for, the Apostle speaketh of *confidence*, or of this well-grounded perswasion, as having some influence upon the other two, while he saith, *boldnesse, and accessse with confidence.* 5. Those excellent priviledges of boldnesse, accessse and confidence, are not only purchased
and

and conveyed unto sinners by Christ ; (as was explained in the point of accessse, chap. 2. ver. 18. doct. 2.) but also they are enjoyed by none but such as are in Christ, and united to Him by a lively and saving faith : and all who are not so in Christ, are estranged from spirituall liberty and boldnesse in prayer, though they be never so much flowing in eloquence and discourse ; They are estranged also from accessse unto God, being banished from His favour and presence, *Psal.* 58. 3. and have no well-grounded confidence, that God doth accept either of their persons or actions, seing He is well-pleased only in Him, *Matth.* 3. 17. for, he saith, *In whom*, meaning Christ, *we have boldnesse and accessse with confidence* : They were first in Him. 6. Faith in Jesus Christ (whereby we receive (*Joh.* 1. 12.) and rest upon Him for salvation, *1/a.* 50. 10.) is one thing, and confidence or perswasion of our acceptation with God is another ; the former being the caule, root and fountain of the latter : For, *Paul* sheweth, that confidence floweth from faith, while he saith, *with confidence by the faith of Him*, or faith in Him. See *Gal.* 2. 20. 7. As faith in Jesus Christ is that grace which uniteth us to Him ; So it not only goeth before our boldnesse, accessse and confidence, but also maketh way for, and is the cause of those : and therefore, the more that faith is kepted in exercise, there will be the more of liberty and boldnesse ; the more of accessse to God and nearnesse, and the more of a well-grounded perswasion of our acceptation by God, and confidence : for, he ascribeth their being in Christ, their accessse, boldnesse and confidence unto faith, while he saith, *by the faith of Him*.

Verf. 13. Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

THe Apostle, having now sufficiently magnified his Office, doth here, in the third branch of this first part of the Chapter, hold forth his main scope in all he hath spoken

spoken from ver. 2. in an exhortation to courage, or a dissuasive from fainting and discouragement in their Christian course, notwithstanding of his present sad sufferings, who had preached the Gospel among them. Which dissuasive, as it is most humbly and affectionately propounded; (for, the word rendred *desire*, signifieth humbly to beg and intreat, *Act.* 3. 2. and 12. 20.) So it is most vehemently urged from three reasons, 1. Because of the worth and dignity of his Apostolick Office, spoken of in the preceeding verses, and related unto here, as one reason of the present dissuasive, in the illative particle *wherefore*. 2. All his tribulations were in a special manner for them, to wit, not only for their confirmation, and example; but mainly because they were occasioned by his publick asserting the priviledges of the Gentiles by faith in Christ without circumcision, *Act.* 22. 21, 22. And thirdly, they were not only profitable unto them in the former respects; but also glorious and honourable, in so far, as God did herein shew how much He esteemed of them, by sending His Apostles not only to preach unto them, but also to confirm the Gospel by their sufferings; and that hereby the glorious priviledges of the Gentiles, as to their interest in Christ, and all the blessings of the Covenant of Grace, were asserted and confirmed in despite of the desperate rage and fury of the Jews, *Philip.* 2. 17. *Dott.* 1. It is an ordinary evill; incident even to those who have once made swift progresse in their Christian course, to faint and relent in it, so as to give way unto lukewarmnesse and coldrifenesse, in stead of their former zeal and fervency, *Rev.* 2. 4. to security and lazinesse, in stead of former watchfulnesse and diligence, *Gal.* 5. 7. to drouping discouragement and backwardnesse, in stead of former courage and chearfulnesse, *Heb.* 12. 12. for, this is the evil of fainting, which Paul did look upon as incident to those Ephesians, and therefore dissuadeth from it; *Wherefore I desire that ye faint not.* 2. As tribulation for the Gospel, whether imminent or already lying on, doth usually make those faint,

and turn remisse in their Christian course, who have not timeously fore-castten trouble before it came, *Mark* 4. 17. So when trouble and persecution befalleth the Ministers of Christ, especially those who are primely instrumentall in the work of the Gospel, then are the Lords people most apt to faint and be discouraged; because that therein they do frequently with great anxiety and diffidence fore-cast irreparable detriment to the work of God, as if God could not find out other hands to carry on His work, when such and such are laid aside: for, *Paul* fore-saw that his tribulation (who, having been such an eminent instrument in the work of the Gospel, did now every day expect death at *Rome*) would occasion their fainting, and therefore he doth guard against it; *I desire, that ye faint not at my tribulation.* 3. Affliction and tribulation for the Gospel, is a triall not only to those who are under it, but to others also, who look on, and are in no lesse hazard to be thereby brangled in their confidence, blunted in their zeal, and rendered remisse in their former forwardness, than the person himself who suffereth: for, *Paul* is more afraid of their fainting, because of his trouble, than of his own; and therefore doth carefully guard against it; *I desire that ye faint not at my tribulation.* 4. It is not sufficient for a faithfull Minister, that he labour earnestly to rouse up people from their naturall deadnesse, and once engage them in the way of Christianity, *Eph.* 5. 14. but he must also endeavour to keep them moving, when they are so engaged, forecasting wisely, and labouring to remove carefully what offences and stumbling-blocks Satan and corrupt flesh may cast in their way to retard them in it, or make them turn aside from it: Thus *Paul* wisely foreseeeth and carefully laboureth to remove that ground of stumbling and fainting, which they were apt to take from his sufferings; *faint not at my tribulations.* 5. A faithfull Minister, suffering for truth, will not be so sollicitous for his own concerns relating to his outward estate, as for the Church and people of God, lest they be turned
aside,

afide, or made to faint by reason of his sufferings: for, *Paul* doth not so much desire, that they would furnish him with things necessary in the prison, or use means for his delivery from it, as that they *faint not at his tribulations*. 6. It is not sufficient that Ministers exoner themselves simply in holding forth to people their dutie, unlesse they be vehemently serious in pressing upon them the practice of it: and this especially in hard declining times, wherein the dead and lukewarm affections of people use not to be easily wrought upon: for, *Paul* doth affectionately desire, or humbly beg of them (as the word signifieth) *that they would not faint*. 7. This may sufficiently guard the Lord's people from discouragement, stumbling, and heartlesse fainting, notwithstanding the sad suffering lot, which is sometimes measured out unto the Lords faithfull servants for the truths cause, when they consider the excellent worth of truth, and how those, who suffer for it, have not cast themselves without necessity upon their sufferings, but were necessitated to meet with them in the way of their calling: for, from what *Paul* hath said formerly, from ver. 2. of his calling to preach the Gospel among the Gentiles, and the worth of that message which he did carry, and was the occasion of his sufferings, he inferreth this dissuasive, *Wherefore, I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations*. 8. This may in reason prevent the fainting and stumbling of the Lords people at the contempt, reproach, and other hardships, under which they who preach the Gospel, do for the most part labour, if they would seriously consider, that all those sufferings are occasioned in a great part by them, in so far, as if it were not for respect to the souls of people, Ministers might do much to shift the crosse, as well as others: for, *Paul* laboureth to prevent their fainting and stumbling at his sufferings from that consideration; *faint not at my tribulations, which are for you*, saith he, implying, if he had not preached the Gospel unto the Gentiles, he might have been free from trouble. 9. So honourable is it to suffer for Christ and

truth; that not only the persons themselves, who suffer, are thereby honoured, *Act. 5. 41.* But also all such as have interest in them: and especially the sufferings of a faithfull Minister, are glorious and honourable unto his flock, as testifying Gods high esteem of them, in sending His servants to suffer for their good: which ought in reason to prevent their fainting at his sufferings; yea, and make them glory in them, and take encouragement from them: for, *Paul sheweth, his tribulation was their glory,* and therefore desireth them not to faint.

Verf. 14. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15. Of whom the whole familie in heaven and earth is named.

THe Apostle doth now follow forth the second part of the Chapter, which was begun, *ver. 1.* and interrupted by a digression untill this verse, for such reason, as was given, *ver. 2.* And in this part of the Chapter (while he giveth a sum of his fervent prayers to God for them, that they might persevere and grow in the faith and experimentall knowledge of the Doctrine of Salvation delivered by them) he doth not only give an evident testimony of his sincere affection and endeavour after their salvation; but also laboureth hereby to beget the like ardency of affection in them, and so doth (indirectly at least, though most pithily) by the example of his prayers, excite them to persevere and make progresse in the experimentall knowledge of, and communion with Jesus Christ.

In this prayer there is, first, a preface in those verses wherein he doth, *1.* repeat the occasion of his prayer, which was mentioned, *ver. 1.* and doth relate, as I there shew, unto the close of *chap. 2.* even because *they were already builded by faith upon Christ.* *2.* He denominateth his prayer from the outward gesture he used therein, *bowing of the knee,* thereby expressing the humble, reverent frame of his heart in prayer. And, *3.* he sheweth unto whom he did

did pray, to wit, God the Father, described, first, from His relation to Jesus Christ, as chap. 1. ver. 17- This is the sum of verse 14. Secondly, from his relation to His Church, as being the Father by Adoption of the whole Church of the truly regenerate, whether triumphant in heaven, or militant upon earth, whether Jew or Gentile, which is here called a *family*, and said to have its name from God, as being His Familie, Children, Domesticks of His household, and that both in name and thing, the one whereof, is not to be separated from the other, seeing God bestoweth not empty names and titles upon any. Now, God is thus described with relation to the purpose in hand; for, hereby the Apostle breaketh down the arrogance of the Jews, who would have had the whole Church denominated from, and contained within the Jewish Nation, excluding the Gentiles, whom therefore *Paul* doth upon all occasions make equal sharers of an interest in God through Christ with the Jews; and thereby sheweth his warrant to pray for perseverance and growth in grace from God, even to them.

From Vers. 14. *Learn*, 1. It is the duty of Christs Ministers, as to teach and admonish the People of God committed to their charge, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. So also to pray to God for them: And that not only in publick with them, as being the mouth of the People unto God, *Joel* 2. 17. but also in private to the Lord for them, seeing their own pains cannot profit without the Lord's blessing, 1 *Cor.* 3. 6. which Ministers ought fervently to seek from God by prayer, else they have not ground to expect it, *Ezek.* 36. 37. for, *Paul*, as he taught these Ephesians; so he prayed for them, and that not only in publick, but also in private, as he here sheweth; *For this cause I bow my knees.* 2. It is of no small advantage unto the Lords People to have such a Minister as is able to pray, and accordingly doth pray pertinently, spiritually, and fervently with them and for them, By whom, as by their mouth, they may have their severall cases made known unto God more distinctly than can

be expressed by many of themselves, *Joel* 2. 17. and they themselves are edified and instructed how to pray with the like affection and fervency, *1 Cor.* 14. 19. By whose affectionate prayers unto God for them, a blessing is drawn down from heaven to make the Word preached effectual in them, *Jam.* 5. - 16. and they themselves incited and roused up to seek after those good things prayed for unto them : hereby also they are comforted and encouraged, as knowing their Minister is speaking to God for them, when he is absent from them, and cannot speak unto them, *Philip.* 1. 4. and when they through some one distemper or other cannot deal with God for themselves, at least in any measure satisfactory to themselves, *Jam.* 5. 14, 15. for, as *Paul's* exhortation and doctrine was advantagious unto these Ephesians ; So also were his fervent prayers in order to their being kept from fainting, and to their up-stirring to endeavour after those good things, which he sought from God unto them, and therefore doth he mention his praying for them in this place ; *For this cause I bow my knees.* 3. From the Apostle's scope in making known unto them, what, and how he prayed for them, See a further note, chap. 1. ver. 17. doct. 1. *I bow my knees.* 4. Our prayers unto God for others, especially the prayers of a Minister for his Flock, should take their rise, not only from their wants, afflictions and sinfull infirmities, *Jam.* 5. 14, 15. but also from the grace and good things of God already received by them, that they may persevere and grow in them, and be preserved from abusing them, seeing the graces of the best are but imperfect, *1 Cor.* 13. 9. subject to decay, *Rev.* 3. 2-- and may be abused, *2 Cor.* 12. 7. for, the Apostle taketh occasion to pray for these Ephesians from the good already received by them, even their being builded already upon Christ, mentioned, chap. 2. ver. 22. unto which the words, *for this cause*, do relate. 5. Though we be not tied by a divine precept or Scripture-example unto any one gesture in prayer, seeing the Saints have used several gestures, according

cording to the present frame of their heart thereby expressed, 1 *King.* 8. 22. 2 *Sam.* 12. 16. *Luke* 18. 13. 2 *Sam.* 7. 18. and though God be a Spirit who will be worshipped in spirit and in truth, *Job.* 4. 24. and careth not for the outward man alone, *Matth.* 15. 7. 8. yet, seeing God craveth service both from the soul and body, as having created and redeemed both, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. and seeing an outward reverend gesture of the body in prayer, doth not only expresse and natively flow from a reverend frame of spirit within, from which the body is acted in other things, but also serveth to stir up the affections in prayer, as being a man's remembrancer what his heart ought to do, if he would not play the grosse hypocrite with God, therefore it is a thing needfull and convenient (if we be not otherwise restrained, *Nehem.* 2. 4.) to use some reverend gesture of the body while we are about the duty of prayer: for, *Paul* did kneel in prayer; *I bow my knees*, saith he. 6. We ought, especially in prayer, to draw near to God with deep reverence unto, and high esteem of, the majesty of God, being joyned with low and mean thoughts of our selves, because of our baseness and unworthiness, seeing God honoureth them who honour Him, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. and giveth grace unto the humble, *Jam.* 4. -6. for, *Paul* did evidence such a frame of heart by *bowing his knees* when he prayed. 7. Deep reverence of heart towards the sacred majesty of God in prayer, may well consist with faith and confident approaching unto God, as a reconciled father. Both of them ought to be joyned together in prayer: yea, and both, when they are sincere and not counterfeit, do mutually strengthen and intend one another, so that the more we put our trust in Him, the more will our hearts fear and adore Him, *Psal.* 130. 4. for, the Apostle exercised not only reverence in his prayer, as is already shown, but also confidence, while he taketh up God as *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and of the whole family of Believers through Him.

8. See further (concerning this title given to God with

relation to Christ) upon chap. 1. ver. 3. in the exposition, and doct. 2. and ver. 17. doct. 3, 5, 6. unto the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

From Verſ. 15. *Learn, 1.* As there is but one Church universal, comprehending all the Elect in all times and places, whether in heaven or earth; So all within the Church are of one kinred and lineage, descending of one common father: for, he designeth the Church to be *one whole family in heaven and earth*: the word signifieth such a family as is the lineage of one man. 2. As this one Church is Gods family and household; (See chap. 2. ver. 19. doct. 8.) So all the members of His Church and family are comprehended either in heaven or earth. Scripture knoweth nothing of a purgatory, or third place different from these: for, the Apostle sheweth this *whole family is in heaven and earth, and named of God.* 3. Those near relations, under which God doth stand towards His Church, are founded upon Jesus Christ: and all the benefits flowing from such relations, are conveyed unto the Church through Him without whom God is a consuming fire to sinners, and in whom He is a reconciled father unto Believers: for, the Apostle looketh upon God, first, as He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and next, as He is the Father of all the Elect; *Of whom the whole family is named,* to wit, His children, *Job. 1. 12.* and domesticks, *Eph. 2. 19.* 4. The near relation which God hath to His Church, and His Church to Him, is sufficient ground and warrant for faith to rest upon Him, and plead with Him for supply and furniture of all grace, and of every thing needfull: for, shall not He provide for His own children, who hath pronounced those among men to be worse than infidels, who provide not for theirs? *1 Tim. 5. 8.* Hence the Apostle maketh this a ground of his confidence to be answered by God in what he sought in behalf of those Ephesians, even Gods fatherly interest in them; *Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.*

Verſ.

Verſ. 16. That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be ſtrengthened with might, by his Spirit in the inner man.

THe Apoſtle doth, ſecondly, particularize thoſe petitions which he put up to God in his prayer: and they are four. The firſt whereof, is in this verſe, to wit, That God from the fountain of that inexhaustible treaſure of His divine attributes (called *His glory*, *Exod.* 33. 18. with 34. 6, 7.) and eſpecially of His mercy and power (which are let forth by the name and epithet of *His glory*, or *glorious*, *Eph.* 1. 6. *Col.* 1. 11.) would furniſh them with a daily increaſe of ſpirituall ſtrength, whereby they might reſiſt the devil, and all ſpirituall adverſaries in their Chriſtian courſe, Chap. 6. 12. which ſtrength was to be wrought by the holy Spirit in their *inward man*, whereby, as, *2 Corinth.* 4. 16. is meant the ſoul, (not ſimply in it ſelf, but as living the life of grace) and thoſe things, which relate to that ſpirituall life: as the outward man doth comprehend all thoſe things belonging to a man's outward eſtate; So, in a word, he prayeth that they may be ſtrong and flouriſh in all things which relate to the ſpirituall eſtate of their eternal ſouls. *Doct.* 1. From the Apoſtle his being able to give an after-account of what he prayed for, ſee chap. 1. ver. 17. *doct.* 2. *that he would grant unto you.* 2. Whatever ſtrength or natural parts of body, or mind, men naturally have to compaſſe their eſſairs of this world, *Gen.* 4. 20, 21, 22. yet they are wholly deſtitute of all ſpirituall ſtrength and activity for compaſſing heaven and happineſſe, and for walking in the way of holineſſe, which leadeth to it: for, the Apoſtle findeth an inlack of this ſtrength, even in the converted Ephesians; and therefore doth ſeek it from God unto them; Much more muſt it be wholly wanting in thoſe who are not yet converted; *That he would grant unto you to be ſtrengthened in the inward man.* 3. Though there be a new principle of

of spirituall strength wrought in those who are renewed at their first conversion, *Jer.* 31. 33. whereby the renewed heart, being wrought upon by the Spirit of God, doth really work that which is spiritually good, *Philip.* 4. 13. Yet a constantly-renewed supply of grace and strength from the Spirit of God, is necessary even to the renewed man, whereby those seeds of grace already wrought in him may be upheld in their being, *Jer.* 32. -40. preserved against the furious assaults of raging tentations, *Luk.* 22. 32. attained, and made to do that which is truly good, *Philip.* 2. 13. and much more, that hereby grace begun in conversion, may be made to grow and advance towards perfection, *Philip.* 1. 6. for, the Apostle prayeth even for those converted Ephesians, that *they may be strengthened with might in the inward man.* 4. Such is the vanity, lightnesse, and inconstancie of our hearts in good, *Psal.* 39. -5. our impotencie to resist tentations, *Matth.* 26. 34. our pronenesse to turn from the wayes of God, *Gal.* 5. 7. So strong, so subtil, so assiduous are our spirituall adversaries, *Eph.* 6. 12. So many are those difficulties, discouragements, diversions and hinderances, which we have to wrestle with, and overcome in the way to heaven, *Act.* 14. -22. that except we be underpropped and strengthened by Gods almighty power, we cannot stand one moment, and much lesse advance in our Christian course: for, therefore doth Paul pray that *they might be strengthened with might in the inward man.* 5. Even the regenerate children of God, in seeking increase of strength, and of more grace from God, must not, if so they would obtain their suit, plead from their merit, or any good use they have made of their former grace; seing upon a strict account it will be found that grace hath not been so improven by the best as it ought, *Isa.* 64. -6-. But they must seek what they so expect as a gift from God's free grace without any respect had to their own worth: for, the Apostle, while he seeketh increase of spirituall strength unto those converted Ephesians, he prayeth that *God would grant,*

grant, or give it as a gift (for the word signifieth so much) and that from the inexhaustible fountain of His glorious grace; *That He would grant unto you according to the riches of His glory*, not, according to your worth.

6. As all the attributes of God, and especially His mercy and power, are not onely altogether glorious, because the glory of God is manifested unto the creatures in their severall wonderfull effects, *Psal. 19. 1, &c.* but are also infinite, and without measure, as being indefatigable in working, wholly insuperable by any impediment or opposition whatsoever, and inexhaustible by supplying any want in the creature; So in making our approaches unto God for seeking any good, and especially saving good, it is most necessary, that we lift our eyes above any thing that is ours, whether our good, or our evil, and fasten them by faith upon that inexhaustible fountain of mercy and power in God, whereby, he is not only willing as mercifull; but also able, as omnipotent, to bestow what ever we shall ask according to his will; for, the Apostle, in seeking spirituall strength for those Ephesians, doth look to the inexhaustible riches of Gods mercy and power, called here *His glory*; *that He would grant according to the riches of His grace.*

7. It is the Spirit of God, the third person in the blessed Trinity, who, taking up His place of abode in the truly regenerate, (*1 Job. 4. 13.*) doth make it His work to renew their strength by upholding and actuating their graces, and making them advance from strength to strength in despite of all imaginable difficulties: neither is there any other strength or might, whether naturall or acquired, which can sufficiently furnish us to rancounter all those difficulties, which are incident in our Christian course, but that whereof the Spirit of God residing in us is the author and giver: for he prayeth *they may be strengthened with might in the inner man from the spirit.*

8. Though Christians are not to neglect their outward and bodily concernments, *1 Tim. 5. 8. 23.* yet the spirituall estate of their eternall souls is to be cared for most, and

and so much, as if it go well with that, and if the soul be strengthened with might for carrying on the concerns thereof, their outward concerns may trouble them the lesse: and especially the care of Ministers should be employed about the inward and spirituall estate of their flock; for, *Paul* prayeth they may be *strengthened in the inner man*, his care did run most upon that.

Verf. 17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith—

HERE is the second petition of the Apostle's prayer, wherein he seeketh that which is the cause of strengthning and corroboration by the Spirit, spoken of, *ver. 16.* even that *Jesus Christ* by vertue of a continued act of lively faith in Him, might be perpetually present in His Vertue. Grace and Spirit, working not only in their tounes and brains, but also and mainly in their hearts. *Dott. 1.* That we may partake of any saving benefit purchased by Christ, and particularly, that we may be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man for doing any thing that is spiritually good, it is most necessary that we partake first of Christ Himself, being most strictly united to Him, and even as the members are to the head, from which they receive sense and motion. Christ giveth nothing of His purchase unto any, but to whom He giveth Himself first, *1 Job. 5. 11, 12.* and to whomsoever He giveth Himself, upon those He bestoweth all things; Christ in us being the hope of glory, *Col. 1. 27.* the fountain of life, *Gal. 2. 20.* and of all things needfull, *1 Job. 4. 4.* for, *Paul*, having prayed that they may be strengthened with might in the inner man, subjoyneth the way and manner how this strength was to be conveyed unto them, even by *Christ's dwelling in their hearts by faith.* 2. There is a strict conjunction and near familiarity between Christ and Believers, even such, in some sort, as is between an indweller, and the house, wherein he dwelleth, whereby *Jesus Christ*,

Christ, God and Man in one person, is present with the Believer, not in His substance only, as He is God ; for, so He is every where, *Jer.* 23. 24. nor in His substance at all, as He is Man; for, so the heavens do contain Him, *Act.* 3. 21. but by His gracious operation and special influence upon them, whereby He quickeneth them, (*Rom.* 8. 10.) ruleth them (*Act.* 9. 6.) and liveth in them, *Gal.* 2. 20. for, he prayeth that *Christ may dwell in their hearts*, which petition is granted, in behalf of all Believers, seeing he prayed in faith. 3. Though Christ doth thus familiarly communicate Himself unto all Believers, so as to dwell in them by His gracious presence; yet not unto all alike : but unto some in a larger measure than unto others, according as He worketh more, and more effectually in some than in others : for, though Christ did already dwell in those converted Ephesians, chap. 2. 22. yet Paul doth pray that *Christ may dwell in them*, which therefore must be understood of a greater measure and degree of His indwelling presence, than formerly they had. 4. Where Jesus Christ doth once take up His abode and dwelling in the heart, there He remaineth constantly and flitteth not : in so far, as though sometimes He withholdeth that gracious influence of His, which is necessary only to the well-being, flourishing, and vigorous thriving of grace in the heart, *Cant.* 5. 6. yet He never withdraweth that influence, which is necessary to the being of grace, and without which grace would utterly die and perish, *Psal.* 73. 23. for, the word rendered *to dwell*, signifieth to take up a fixed and immovable habitation, and differeth from another word very like unto it, which signifieth to sojourn in a place only for a season, *1 Pet.* 1. 17. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts.* 5. Though even the bodies of Believers be temples of the holy Ghost, and consequently of Jesus Christ ; for Christ dwelleth in them by His Spirit, *1 Cor.* 6. 19. yet the heart, will and affections of man, are the chief place of His habitation, wherein He resideth as in His strong citadel, from which He commandeth

deth the other faculties and members. And without His presence there, He cannot have any habitation in any part of the man elsewhere; the tongue cannot receive Him by speaking, nor the understanding by knowing, nor the hand by external working, except He be received in the heart, from which proceed the issues of life, *Pro. 4. 23.* for, he prayeth that *Christ may dwell in their hearts, 6.* Though Jesus Christ doth make His first entry unto, and dwelleth in Believers by His Spirit, *1 Job. 4. 13.* whereby He uniteth them to Himself, quickeneth and ruleth them, yea, and worketh the grace of faith in them, *Job. 6. 44.* yet, faith being so wrought, the Believer doth thereby lay hold on Christ, *Philip. 3. - 12.* giveth Him daily employment, *Job. 15. - 5.* and Christ being so laid hold upon and imployed, remaineth and resideth in the Believer: for therefore is it, that he ascribeth this indwelling of Christ in the heart unto faith; *that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. 7.* Such is the power and vertue of faith; that those things, which are at furthest distance, whether in respect of time (*Job. 8. 56.*) or of place, are present to it, and to the heart by it. Even as those things are present to the eye and ear, which are clearly seen and distinctly heard, though in respect of place they may be many miles distant, so whole Christ both as God and Man is present to the heart in His merit, vertue and efficacy, laid hold upon by faith, though His humane nature be locally present in heaven only, *Act. 3. 21.* and therefore there is no necessity, in order to our spirituall life, that His body be present in the Sacrament, and received by the mouth and stomach: for, He is conveyed unto, and dwelleth in the heart by faith, besides that the flesh profiteth nothing, *Job. 6. - 63.*

Verf. 17. --- *That ye being rooted and grounded in love,*
 18. *May be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the*
breadth, and length, and depth, and height :
 19. *And to know the love of Christ, which passeth know-*
ledge,---

THE third petition followeth, wherein the thing prayed for, is an excellent effect of that spirituall corroboration, flowing from Christs dwelling in them by faith, spoken of, ver. 16. 17- even that God would make them grow in knowledge, especially in the experimentall knowledge of his love in Christ. And, first, he setteth down the mean of attaining the thing prayed for, to wit, their firm and sure laying hold upon, and adhering to the love and free grace of God in Christ, as it is revealed in the Gospel, by the grace of faith, as trees are firmly fastened in the ground by their roots, and edifices are built, and lean upon their strong foundations: for, the two words *rooted* and *grounded*, are metaphors taken from trees and edifices, ver. -17. Secondly, the request it self, first proponed more obscurely, to wit, that they might be *able to comprehend*, or certainly to understand what that love of God in Christ is, whereof he hath presently spoken, and is to speak immediately afterwards; and therefore it is most agreeable to the present purpose, that it be here understood as the thing which he would have them able to comprehend in its infinit greatnesse and full perfection, according to all its dimensions, as of *breadth*, whereby it is extended unto all ages, *Matth.* 28. 20. and all ranks, *1 Tim.* 2. 4. of *length*, whereby it reacheth from eternity to eternity, *Psal.* 103. 17. of *depth*, whereby it stoupeth down to the lowest depths of sin and misery, and draweth sinners from thence, *Psal.* 86. 13. and of *height*, whereby it reacheth up to heavenly joyes and happines, and carrieth sinners up thither, *Joh.* 14. 3. which are the four usuall dimensions and measures, according to which we ordinarily

ordinarily take up the bignesse of greatest bodies. And withall, he sheweth that this comprehension, or up-taking of Gods love here prayed for, was in part attained, and in its full measure attainable after time by all reall Saints and sound Believers; that hereby those Ephesians might be more animated and incited to aspire unto it, ver. 18. Secondly, the request is proponed more plainly; to wit, that they might know in some measure, and chiefly from their own experience, this love, which is here called *the love of Christ*, not to seclude the love of the Father, or holy Ghost; but because, the love of the whole Trinity is conveyed in the effects thereof towards lost sinners through Christ and His merit, *Job. 3. 16.* and concerning this love he affirmeth, that it *doth passe knowledge*, or created understanding to know it, to wit, fully, and in its utmost extent, seing it is infinit, as God Himself is infinit, ver. 19.

From ver. -17. *Learn, 1.* As trees cannot long stand against the blasts of boisterous winds, except their roots be deeply fastened in some good ground, and as houses cannot remain long firm and strong, except they be built upon some sure foundation; So neither can Professors hold out for any space of time against the furious assaults of many violent tentations, except they be under-propped by, and rely upon some strong foundation; for, the Apostle, expressing that stability and constancy arising from the faith of Gods love, which he wished for to those Ephesians, by two metaphors taken from trees deeply rooted, and houses strongly built, doth imply, that without the faith of this love they were as trees without a root, and houses without a foundation; *that ye being rooted and grounded in love.* 2. The only sure foundation, whereon the soul being built and fastened, is able to stand out against the strongest blasts of most violent tentations, is the unchangeable and free love of God in Christ revealed in the Gospel; and laid hold upon by faith: and no conceit of our own righteousness,
natural

naturall courage, fixed resolutions, or such like, *Matth. 26. 33.* with *70.* for, the Apostle would have them rooted and grounded in love, to wit, the love of God in Christ. 3. As this love of God in Jesus Christ, is a most firm rock and sure foundation in it self; So it concerneth those, who would be sustained by it against the furious assaults of Sathans tentations from all hands, to be firmly fastened in, and built upon it: which is then done, when they do not rest upon the notionall knowledge thereof in the brain, so as to be able pertinently to discourse of it; but when this marvellous love, and all the good things prepared by it are laid hold upon by faith, as they are offered: and this not faintly, but seriously, as we would grip to a thing upon life and death, *1 Tim. 1. 15.* for, *Paul* would have them firmly fastned in, and built upon God's love, as trees are rooted in the ground, and houses are joyned with their foundations. And the mean whereby they were to be so rooted and grounded in God's love, is the grace of faith, as appeareth from a parallel place, *Col. 2. 7.* *That ye being rooted and grounded in love.*

From ver. 18. *Learn, 1.* As they who have found the saving effects of Gods love in Christ, and consequently cannot but know something of it, do yet know but a small portion thereof; So the knowledge, and chiefly the experimentall knowledge of this abounding and marvellous love, from the felt and known effects thereof, is of great concernment unto Believers, and ought to be sought after by them accordingly: for, this knowledge is not only pleasant, as being of a subject wonderfull, but also edifying, both in order to our comfort, *Rom. 5. - 2.* with *5.* and to our incitement unto duty, *2 Cor. 5. 14.* for, he prayeth for a greater measure of this knowledge, even to those converted Ephesians, who had somewhat of it already; *That ye may be able to comprehend what is the breadth, &c.* 2. Our embracing by faith the love of God in Christ, and those good things prepared by it, as they are revealed and offered in the Go-

spel, is a necessary mean for attaining to fuller insight in the admirable nature of this love: yea, and to the sense and feeling of it, and experimentall knowledge flowing thence: for, he premits their being rooted in the faith of this love, ver. -17. as a mean for attaining the more full understanding, and especially the experimentall knowledge of it; *That ye being rooted — may be able to comprehend.* 3. This love of God in Jesus Christ to lost sinners, is so large, (*Isa.* 55. 8, 9.) so free, (*Hos.* 14. 4.) and in all respects so wonderfull, *Psal.* 31. 19. So narrow are hearts to take it up, and so strange are the wayes of conveying the effects and fruits of this love through a wilderness of triall and humiliation going before, *Deut.* 8. 14, 15, 16. that though it be revealed in the Gospel, *Joh.* 3. 16. yet no man can attain to know it so, as certainly to believe the reality of it, except it be given unto him graciously of God; and therefore prayer to God, would be joyned with the use of other means for attaining to it, for, *Paul* doth pray to God that they *may be able to comprehend*, or certainly to understand and know *what is the breadth.* 4. We are not to content our selves with a superficial view of Gods free love in Christ; but ought to take most accurate inspection of it in all its dimensions, and in all those severall respects and wayes wherein it is manifested, endeavouring, at least, to know it so far, as that which is infinite may be known by finite creatures, and to know it in its outmost capacity, as reaching beyond all created understanding, upward, downward, to the right-hand, and to the left; that so we may be the more constrained to our duty by it; more ravished with the thoughts of it, and may draw more solid comfort from it. All which profitable effects, are obstructed by our narrow thoughts and shallow apprehensions of Gods love in Christ: for, he prayeth *they may be able to comprehend it in all its dimensions of breadth and length, depth and height.* 5. As every real Saint, and all who are inherently holy have their allotted measure from God of the saving knowledge of Gods love

love in Christ, and shall attain to the full knowledge thereof afterwards; So whatever priviledge the Lord is pleased to bestow upon the Saints in common, we ought to aspire unto it, and confidently expect to receive it from the Lord: for, as he maketh this comprehension and knowledge, here spoken of, a common priviledge of all Saints; So he doth thereby animate and incite the Ephesians to seek and expect it from God in answer to his prayers; *That ye may be able to comprehend with all Saints.* 6. As the love of Christ is the common treasure and allowance of all Saints, whatever be their different lot in other things; So they who would clear an interest in this love, must study sanctity and holiness, as that without which no man can convincingly prove his interest in it, *Job. 14. 21, 23.* for, he maketh the comprehending of Christs love, a priviledge of those only who are Saints and holy; *Ye may be able to comprehend with all Saints.*

From Verf. 19- *Learn, 1.* The love of God in Christ, and of Christ to lost sinners, is so rich and unsearchable, (*Eph. 2. 7.*) so vast, boundlesse, yea, and infinit, (*See ver. 18.*) So matchlesse, and without any parallel to equal it, whereby we might come to the exact knowledge of it, *Rom. 5. 7, 8.* that not only the naturall man cannot understand it at all, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* but even those who are truly renewed, do not take it up fully, as it is in it self, and so, as they can expresse those infinit and unsearchable riches which are in it: they do but know in part, *1 Cor. 13. 9.* for, the Apostle saith, *this love of Christ passeth knowledge.* 2. Though this love of Christ passeth knowledge in the sense presently mentioned; yet every true Believer should endeavour to attain, yea, and doth attain to the knowledge of it in some measure, and so far as is necessary for their salvation and comfort: for, though this love is unsearchable, yea, and infinit; yet created understanding may so far comprehend it, as to know it to be infinit; and that there is not so much known, but more doth yet remain to be known of it.

They may know it so, as to stand and wonder at it, as not being able perfectly to comprehend it : and they may know it thus, partly, from what the Spirit of God in Scripture, condescending to our capacity so far as is possible, doth speak of it ; and partly, from those effects of this unsearchable love which they do find to be wrought in themselves by it : for, the Apostle prayeth *they may know this love of Christ which passeth knowledge* : hereby implying, that the knowledge thereof may be attained in some measure, and that it is our duty to seek after it. 3. The infinit and unsearchable nature of this love of God in Christ to sinners, shoud be so far from discouraging Believers to search after the knowledge of it, that by the contrary we ought to be so much the more encouraged in that search, and this for the reasons given, ver. 8. doct. 12. for, he addeth this of its passing knowledge, as it seemeth, of purpose to provoke them so much the more to seek after the knowledge of it ; *And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.*

Verf. 19. — *that ye might be filled with all the fulnesse of God.*

HERE is the fourth and last petition of the Apostles prayer, wherein he prayeth for the full perfection and accomplishment of all those other things, which he sought for them in the three former, even that they might be more and more filled with all the graces of God's Spirit, untill they should come to the compleat fulnesse of grace in glory, when God shall be all in all, 1 Cor. 15.-28. for, the original doth read, *that ye may be filled unto all the fulnesse of God*, even while grace begun here be fully compleated in glory hereafter ; which perfection of grace to be attained in the life to come, is called *the fulnesse of God* : not, as if the essence of the Deity were either in whole, or in part to be communicated unto the glorified Saints, which is incommunicable unto any creature ; but because it floweth immediately from that
His

His infinit and incommunicable fulnesse, as streams from the fountain, 1 *Corinth.* 15. -28. and doth consist in the full enjoying of Him, 1 *Job.* 3. -2. *Dock.* 1. There is a fulnesse and compleatnesse in grace attainable even by Believers here, to wit, such as is sufficient for their present state of travellers and warriours upon earth, though not for the state of triumphers and possessors in heaven. They may attain to be compleat in Christ, as not only possessing all things by faith and hope, but being indued also with such a measure of the graces of God's Spirit, as is requisite to bear them through against, and make them gloriously victorious over, the chiefest adversaries, *Col.* 1. 11. Such a fulnesse is spoken of, *Rom.* 15. 14. 1 *Corinth.* 1. 5, 7. and prayed for here; *That ye may be filled.* 2. All the fulnesse, and compleatnesse in grace attainable here, is but an emptinesse, being compared with that fulnesse in glory, which shall be attained hereafter, called here the *fulnesse of God*, and is made mention of as the journey's end, to be aspired unto and aimed at, as a step far beyond any fulnesse which can be attained here: for, he saith, *that ye may be filled with, or untill, all the fulnesse of God*: where he implieth a two-fold fulnesse, the former attainable here, by which we advance to that other fulnesse in glory, which shall be enjoyed hereafter. 3. The desires and endeavours of Believers after Christ and Grace, should not be easily satisfied, nor stand at a stay for every attainment; but ought to be enlarged, and alwayes advancing towards a further measure than any thing already received, even to that fulnesse of grace attainable here; yea, and the utmost measure of grace here; is not to be rested upon, as fully satisfying, nor any thing else, untill grace be fully compleated in glory hereafter: for, the Apostle, not being satisfied with what he hath asked already, doth here pray, *that they may be filled even untill all the fulnesse of God*: and hereby teacheth them to be satisfied with no lesse. 4. The state of Believers in heaven shall be most glorious and blessed, as being no lesse than, first,

the enjoying of Gods immediate presence by sense, not by faith or through the glasse of Ordinances, which shall then be laid aside, God Himself being all in all, 1 Cor. 13. 12. And, secondly, the enjoying of His presence fully, and so far as finit creatures can be capable of that which is infinit, 1 Job. 3. - 2. for, this is to be filled with the fulnesse of God, which shall be attained in heaven.

Verf. 20. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.

THe Apostle, lastly, concludeth his prayers with an heavenly strain of thanksgiving to God, whereby he laboureth, indirectly at least, to perswade them that he would be answered in those great and large petitions, which he had put up to God for them, seeing he himself was so much perswaded of it, that he breaketh forth in thanksgiving to God for it, even as if all he sought had been already granted. And therefore he doth labour to perswade them further by that apposit description, which he giveth of God in the first part of this thanksgiving, taken from God's infinit power, whereby He is able, not only to bestow moe things and greater than we can either expresse, by seeking them in prayer, or comprehend in our thoughts, which are oftentimes larger than can be vented by expressions; but also to bestow those greater things in a large and abundant measure. And because this of God's power, absolutely considered, had been a weak ground for faith to lean upon, seeing He is able to do many things which He doth not, *Matth. 26. 53.* therefore he giveth an instance, or proof, of this infinit power in what He had wrought in Believers already, by converting, quickening and carrying on the work of grace to some good length in them, leaving unto them to gather hence, that the same power would be forth-coming, and applied unto work for them in time coming

coming, as the exigence of their case and state should require. *Doct. 1.* As the duties of prayer and thanksgiving, do mutually contribute for the help one of another, (See chap. 1. ver. 16. *doct. 1.*) So we cannot ordinarily be fervent in prayer, but of necessity our heart will sometimes break forth in thanksgiving to God among hands, occasioned partly, by those hopes of an answer, which sometimes are in the very time of prayer suggested by God, *Psal. 6. 8.* partly, from the remembrance of mercies formerly bestowed, which are called to mind in prayer, as arguments to plead for our present suit, *Psal. 56. 12, 13.* and partly, from that felt access to God enjoyed in prayer, *Psal. 57. 1, &c.* with His gracious presence and assistance communicated to the heart, chiefly when we are discharging that duty, *Psal. 138. 3.* for, *Paul*, having prayed fervently, doth find his heart constrained to break forth in a song of praise; *Now unto him that is able — be glory.* 2. As we ought not only to pray, but also study what grounds of hope we may attain, for coming speed in prayer; So we should have such conceptions of God, and expresse them to Himself by way of thanksgiving in prayer, as may furnish our hearts with grounds of confidence, that we shall be heard in what we seek: for, *Paul*, in giving thanks to God, describeth Him from this, that *He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think*, hereby giving them ground to believe, that the former great things sought by him should be granted. 3. We ought especially to establish our hearts in the faith of Gods omnipotency and power to bestow that which we seek, as a main prop for confidence in prayer, seeing it is above all doubt, that God will do whatever He is able for granting our petitions, if we seek those things which He hath promised, *1 Job. 5. 14.* and therefore usually the doubts of Believers concerning God's good-will to grant, are but pretences to cover their shamefull and atheisticall doubting about His power: for, *Paul*, to ground their confidence in expectation of an answer, describeth

scribeth God from His power, whereby *He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.* 4. As our prayers would be well digested, and diligent consideration had of those things we are to seek, else our prayers are but lip-labour of the grossest sort; So our conceptions concerning things lawfull and necessary to be sought in prayer, go oftentimes beyond our expressions: Either we dare not expresse them, they are so great, *Luk. 15. 18, 19.* or we cannot expresse them, they are so many, that expression is too narrow a vent or passage for them, *Rom. 8. -26.* for, he joyneth *thinking*, or conceiving, with asking, and speaketh of it as being more capacious and comprehensive than our asking doth reach unto, while he saith, *above all that we ask or think.* 5. So large is God in His bounty, and so mercifull in His way of dealing with His people, that He doth far out-stripe not only their prayers, but also their very conceptions and hopes, in so far as when they obtain not all they ask, even then they get above what they ask, delay or disappoyment being in that case much better for severall reasons than a present grant: for, saith *Paul*, *He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.* Now he speaketh not of His absolute power, but as it is operative, and working in, and for Believers, as appeareth from the instance given; *according to the power that worketh in us*, saith he. 6. This superabundant work of Gods mighty power, transcending the hopes and apprehensions of the most enlarged hearts, is not reserved wholly to be manifested in the glorification of the Elect; but is manifested already to every Believer in part; in so far as the work of their conversion at the first, of carrying on the work of grace in them afterwards, of their through-bearing under, and delivery from crosses and trials, the timous and unexpected trysting of severall comfortable providences with their necessities, are so many proofs and instances of Gods working above what they do ask, or think; for *He is able to work so*, saith he, *according to the power that worketh*

in us. 7. We ought to look upon the bypast instances of Gods gracious and powerfull working in us, as so many confirmations of our faith, that He will work powerfully in us for the time to come, yea, and above what He hath already wrought, according as our present state shall call for it: for, he maketh Gods working powerfully in them at their conversion, an argument to confirm them, that God would work exceeding abundantly even to the fulfilling of all his petitions for them, the accomplishment of some whereof, to wit, their being filled with the fulnesse of God, was more than any thing already wrought in them; *according to the working of His mighty power*, saith he.

Verf. 21. *Unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end, Amen.*

NExt, there is the thanksgiving it self, wherein the Apostle (having his own heart, doubtlesse, duely affected and overcharged with high thoughts of Gods goodnesse, mercy, power, justice, and other attributes manifested chiefly in that admirable work of Redemption, whereof he hath spoken at length from the beginning of this Epistle; and having engaged his heart to set forth the glory and excellency of those praiseworthy attributes, both in word and work) doth further wish that this duty of glorifying God may, and thereby also doth foreprophecie that it shall be gone about by Gods true Church, to wit, among visible professours, members of the Church, and chiefly, sincere Believers, (even all such as should find the saving effects of Gods glorious attributes in their own experience) and this in *all ages* and generations, so long as the world should stand, and to all eternity after time shall be ended; and by *Jesus Christ*, in whom all their sacrifices of prayers and praises, or of any other performance, are accepted of God. *Doct. 1.* The subject matter of a Believers long of praise and glory to God, is not only those things which
God

God hath graciously done already; but what He is yet to do, together with the consideration of His power and goodwill to do them: for, the Apostle doth here ascribe glory to God, even for what *He was able to do above what they could ask or think*, as appeareth from the connexion of the two verses. 2. As we ought to make conscience of praise and thanksgiving to God our selves; So, such is the weight of this duty in it self, *Psal. 106. 2.* and so far short doth the best come in it, *Neb. 9. -5.* so profitable is this duty unto those who do practise it, *Psal. 147. 1.* that we would seriously wish, and accordingly endeavour that many others would take a list of it, and joyn with us in this weighty task of giving glory to God: for, this is a part of *Paul's* giving glory to God, even a wish that the Church may joyn with him in it; *Unto Him be glory in the Church.* 3. Though it be the duty of all reasonable creatures to set forth Gods glory, yea, and all do set it forth one way or other, even damned men and devils in a passive way, *Rom. 9. 17.* Yet only those are fit to go about this heavenly duty in a spiritual manner, and only such will make conscience of it, whom God hath separated from the world unto Himself, and upon whom He doth manifest the gracious effects of His praise-worthy attributes: for, he enjoyneth this duty unto the Church, and especially to real Believers in it, because the Lord doth make His glorious attributes in their gracious effects, manifest only to such, *Psal. 76. 1, 2.* *Unto Him be glory in the Church.* 4. Praise and thanksgiving is a duty to be performed, not only by Professors and Believers severally and apart, but by all of them conjunctly in the assemblies of Gods people, as being a part of that publick homage we owe to God, *Psal. 65. 1.* and a mean of mutuall edification, *Col. 3. 16.* for, he saith *unto Him be glory in the Church.* 5. Though the duty of thanksgiving and praise be all which God requireth from us for favours bestowed on us, *Psal. 50. 15.* yet, we cannot discharge even this duty of our selves and acceptably, but by Jesus Christ, through whom

whom we have furniture and strength to do, *Philip. 4. 13.* accessse unto God in doing, *Eph. 2. 18.* and acceptation with God, when we have done either this, or any other duty, *Eph. 1. - 6.* for, he saith unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus. 6. As God shall never want glory from His Church; So there shall alwayes be a Church through all ages to hold up this song of praise and glory to God, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, *Matth. 16. - 18.* neither shall the Church ever in any age want matter of praise: (the saddest times want not their own mercies, *Ezek. 9. - 13.*) for as this is a wish, so it is a prophesie, that unto Him shall be glory in the Church through all ages. 7. See further (from the continuance of this song unto all eternity, and from the Apostles Amen, whereby he closeth the thanksgiving) upon *Gal. 1. ver. 5. doct. 3. and 4. World without end, Amen.*

CHAP. II II.

THe Apostle, having in the three preceeding Chapters given a short sum of saving doctrine, doth now, to ver. 21. chap. 6. exhort them to suitable practice. And, first, being to presse upon them the practice of such duties as are more general and common to all, as they are Christians, to chap. 5. ver. 22. He doth, in the first part of this Chapter, exhort them to unity: and, to make way for his so doing, he first premitteth a general exhortation to walk worthy of their vocation, ver. 1. And next, subjoyneth a more particular exhortation unto such graces, as have a more special influence upon unity, as humility, &c. ver. 2. and so doth fall upon his intended scope, which is to presse upon them the study of unity, ver. 3. Which he inforceth, 1. by an argument taken from seven things, which are one and the same in the Church and all the true

true members thereof, ver. 4, 5, 6. Secondly, by an other argument, taken from these things which are not one, but diverse, almost in every member, to wit, diversity of gifts and graces, and their different measures; which diversity he sheweth doth also tend to union, first, because all those gifts and different measures do come from one author, Christ, ver. 7. which he confirmeth from *Psal.* 78. 18. cited, ver. 8. commented upon and applied, ver. 9, 10. And further confirmeth it, by giving an instance of those severall gifts, in the severall offices appointed by Christ in the Church, ver. 11. Secondly, because they are all given for promoting the same end, the edifying of the Church, first, propounded, ver. 12. secondly, illustrated from the term of its continuance by those means, ver. 13. and from two of its fruits, to wit, preservation from error, ver. 14. and growth in grace, ver. 15. by vertue of influence conveyed from Christ, ver. 16.

In the second part, he dehortheth them from all impiety and profanity in the general; first, because unconverted Gentiles did live in those, ver. 17. whose godlesse conversation is set forth distinctly in its severall branches and degrees, ver. 18, 19. Secondly, because the knowledge which they had of Christ, was inconsistent with such a licentious life, ver. 20. which he proveth from three things, which that knowledge did oblige, and strongly incline them to, first, to mortifie the old man, ver. 22. secondly, to have the mind or understanding renewed, ver. 23. thirdly, to put on the new man in righteousness and holiness, ver. 24.

In the third part of the Chapter, are six particular precepts, belonging to the second Table: The first is to abstain from lying, and to speak truth, ver. 25. The second, to moderate and suppress anger, ver. 26. else they did cast open doors for Satan to tempt them unto some mischief, ver. 27. The third, to abstain from stealing, and to labour diligently in some lawfull calling, ver. 28. The fourth, to abstain from all corrupt communication,
and

and to utter edifying purpose in their ordinary discourse, ver. 29. because they would otherwise grieve the spirit, ver. 30. The fifth, is, to abstain from all the branches, degrees, and effects of sinfull anger, ver. 31. The sixth is, to exercise kindnesse and tender-heartednesse in mutual forgivenesse, ver. 32.

Verf. 1. *I Therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.*

THe Apostle doth here inforce one generall duty, which is a comprehensive sum of all such other duties as he is to presse afterwards, and whereof that unity, unto which he exhorteth in the first part of the Chapter, is a special evidence. Which general exhortation, is, *that* (supposing that they were effectually called, at least they took themselves for such, and the better part were really such) *they would walk worthy of their vocation*, not, as if they had been to purchase and merit by their walking, that God should call them: for, the text holdeth out, that they behoved to be called, before they could walk after the manner which the Apostle here presseth, and therefore were not to merit vocation by their walking: See 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. but that they ought to walk suitably, and as it becometh those who are dignified with such a calling, as the word is rendred, *Rom.* 16. 3. Which exhortation is propounded by way of intreaty, and backed with two arguments. The first whereof, is hinted at in the illative particle, *therefore*, and it is taken from that excellent state, in which free grace had placed them, spoken of in the three preceeding Chapters. The second, is taken from the suffering condition of *Paul* himself who did exhort, whose sad sufferings might justly challenge from them obedience unto those truths for which he suffered, as that which would comfort him much under his sufferings; and their denial whereof could not but adde affliction.

flition to his bonds. Hence *Learn*, 1. The Doctrine of salvation through free grace in Jesus Christ, is so far from ministring an occasion of security, ungodlinesse or profanitie, that there is no stronger argument to induce men to the conscientious practice of holines in all the duties thereof, than sanctified knowledge, saving faith, and the solid consideration of that Doctrine, especially seeing the principles thereof do many wayes engage the Believer to lead an holy life, *Rom. 6. 2. &c.* and the free-gifted salvation offered by it cannot be imbraced, except covenanted strength for through-bearing in the way of holinesse be imbraced also, *Rom. 8. 1.* for, he inferreth the study of holinesse from the Doctrine of salvation through free grace; the former being, as it were, the native result, and inseparable companion of the latter; *I therefore beseech you, that ye walk worthy.* 2. Though there be a necessary connexion betwixt our imbracing the doctrine of salvation through free grace, and the study of an holy life, as said is; yet such is our natural avernesse from holinesse, *Rom. 8. 7.* so many are the tentations and difficulties which ly in our way to it, *2 Tim. 3. 12.* that even, the best of men do need the spur of earnest and vehement exhortation to excite unto it; for, notwithstanding that *Paul* holdeth forth upright practice, as the result of imbracing the former doctrine; Yet he seeth it needfull to exhort and beseech them, *that they walk worthy of their vocation.* 3. A suffering lot for Christ, is such, as those who rightly improve it, will highly esteem of it, not onely in their first thoughts, and at their first engaging in it, but also, and chiefly in their cold blood, after a times experience, and in their second thoughts: for, *Paul* having boasted (*chap. 3. ver. 1.*) of his being a prisoner for Christ, he doth here repeat the same, to shew he had not reason to eat-in any thing of what he formerly had said; *I therefore the prisoner of the Lord.* 4. It sweetneth much the sufferings of the Saints, that he for whom they suffer is Christ, the Lord, as being worthy

to be suffered for, *Act. 5. 41.* and mighty in power to support them under suffering, (*Matth. 10. 19, 20.*) to deliver from it, (*2 Corinth. 1. 10.*) to better them by it, (*Rom. 5. 3, 4.*) and to reward them freely for it, *2 Thess. 1. 7.* for, Paul comforteth himself in this, that he was the prisoner of the Lord, whom (*chap. 3. 1.*) he called Christ. 5. The suffering lot of Christs Ministers obligeth people to yeeld themselves so much the more obedient in the Lord unto their Ministry, by walking like the Gospel, there being nothing more comfortable to His suffering Servants, than when their sufferings are usefull for that end, *Phil. 1. 14.* and nothing more weighry than when it is otherwise, *2 Tim. 4. 10, 16.* for, Paul designeth himself from his sufferings, hereby to adde weight to his exhortation; *I therefore the prisoner of the Lord.* See more from this stile taken by Paul, *chap. 3. ver. 1. doct. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Doct. 6.* So ticklish are people to be dealt with in the point of pressing duty, and so ready to cast at duty, when it is not pressed in a way suitable to their own mind, *2 Tim. 4. 3.* that though Ministers are not to be directed by people, as to the matter which they preach, *2 Chron. 18. 12, 13.* yet as to the manner of bearing-in what is pressed, they are much to condescend to that way, which will be most taking with, and gaining upon, their humor: and particularly, they are to presse the duties of holinesse, with as much of fervent, earnest, and insinuitive entreaty, as if it were a matter of their own concernment only, or as if people by their obedience were to hurt themselves for doing a favour unto their Ministers; for, Paul doth presse his exhortation by an insinuitive entreaty, rather than by commanding; *I beseech you*, the word signifieth, vehemently to entreat. 7. It is no small honour, which God doth put upon His people, when He effectually calleth them, and by His omnipotent and irresistible power (*Job. 12. 32.*) doth draw these, who were before dead in sins and trespasses (*Eph. 2. 1.*) from under the power of darknesse, and translateth them unto the Kingdom

Kingdom of His dear Son, *Col. 1. 13.* giving them actuall possession of the state of grace, with all the priviledges accompanying that state here, *1 Job. 3. 2.* and a right unto, (*Luk. 12. 32.*) with the well grounded hope of, glory, to be enjoyed hereafter, *Eph. 1. 18.* for he speaketh of their vocation, as a state of much dignity and honour, requiring a singular sort of walking answerable to it; *That ye walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith ye are called.* 8. So far are we from meriting by our holy and tender walking, that God shall call us out of nature unto the state of grace, and consequently bestow a right to heaven and glory upon us, that our effectuall calling doth go before our holy walking, as that, without which we cannot walk one step acceptably in the wayes of God: for, *Paul* supponeth them to be already called, and from that exhorteth them to walk answerably; *That ye walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith ye are called.* 9. It is the duty of called Christians, and will also be their care and study, to have a constant eye upon that dignity, unto which they are called; that so they may walk worthy of it, and answerably unto it: which then is in some measure performed, when we have respect unto all the commandments, *Psal. 119. 6.* and do in a speciall manner make conscience of all those particular duties, aftermentioned in this Epistle: for, he exhorteth them to walk worthy of their vocation, as their duty following upon, and flowing from, that dignity put upon them in effectuall calling; *Walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith ye are called.* 10. But more particularly, Our carriage and practice cannot be answerable to this excellent state, to which we are called, except, first, we shake off slouth and laziness, bestirring our selves in the way of duty. Secondly, as we begin well, so we hold on without down-sitting and turning aside. And, thirdly, we be daily advancing, and making progresse in our Christian course; for, he designeth a carriage answerable to this excellent state by *walking*, which implieth all those three, motion

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That ye walk worthy of the vocation.

Verf. 2. *With all lowlinesse and meeknesse, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.*

HE doth, next, exhort unto severall graces and duties, the exercise and practice whereof, are not only branches of that walking worthy of their vocation, spoken of, ver. 1. and here pressed, as such, but also necessary helps and means for attaining and entertaining that unity, which he is afterwards to presse, as, first, humility, or *lowlinesse*, a grace and vertue, whereby a man, from the sense of his own infirmities (*Gal. 6. ver. 1.*) and the uncertainty of outward things which he enjoyeth, (*1 Tim. 6. 17.*) doth esteem but meanly and soberly of himself, and of all that is his, *Philip. 2. 3.* Secondly, *meeknesse*, a vertue, whereby we are rendered tractable, and easie to be conversed with, *Jam. 3. 17.* whereby also we moderate anger, so that we are not provoked but for just causes, and not more, or longer provoked than the Word of God alloweth, and do speedily restrain and suppress anger, when it hath transgressed the just bounds, *Eph. 4. 26.* Thirdly, *long-suffering*, which is the same in substance with meeknesse: only, it further implyeth the continuance of the exercise of meeknesse, so as it is not interrupted, neither with length of time, nor with multiplication, nor heightening of injuries, *Matth. 18. 22.* Fourthly, mutuall *forbearance*, flowing from *love*: for the right performance whereof, the former three are spoken of as necessary qualifications, (as appeareth from the grammaticall construction of the words) and it consisteth in our pleasant bearing with, and tolerating of whatsoever is displeasing, or loathsome to us in the carriage of others, though not so, as to connive at their sin, or to neglect means of reclaiming them from their sin, *Gal. 6. 1, 2.* yet so, as we do not withhold any necessary duty, which we otherwise

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owe unto them, *Matth. 5. 44.* or cease from following after peace and concord with them, *Heb. 12. 14.* Hence, *Learn, 1.* How diligent soever a Christian be in publick, or private duties of Gods immediate worship, or in the duties of his particular calling; yet he doth not walk answerably to that excellent dignity unto which he is called, except he be of an humble, meek and condescending spirit, and do evidence himself to be so, by his digesting of, bearing with, and passing over the infirmities and failings of those whom he converseth with, in so far as he do not make a breach upon the peace and unity of the Church of God: for, he doth instance their *walking worthy of their vocation* in the exercise of humility, meeknesse, long-suffering, and in mutuall forbearance, in order to the keeping of unity, in this and the following verses; *With all lowlinesse, &c.*

2. The grace of humility and lowlinesse, as it is most becoming Christians; so it is of necessary use to fit men for the duty of mutuall forbearance in order to unity and peace; in so far, as the humble man, being conscious of his own infirmities, doth know he needeth as much of forbearance from God and others, as others do need from him, *Rom. 7. 18.* and through humility is made to think but meanly of himself, and highly of others, *Philipp. 2. 3, 4.* and so to eschew vain glory and pride, the usuall occasion of strife, *Prov. 13. 10.* for, he presseth lowlinesse, in order to forbearance and unity, while he saith, *with all lowlinesse, forbearing one another,* and ver. 3. *endeavouring to keep unity.*

3. Humility and lowlinesse is also necessary to the exercise of meeknesse and long-suffering; those only being able to moderate anger, and to restrain the inundations of their impetuous passions, when stirred and provoked by real injuries, who being conscious of their own infirmities, do judge but meanly of themselves, and therefore not too good to have, by the Lords wise and gracious dispensation, a suffering lot from the wicked and injurious carriage of others, *2 Sam. 16. 10.* for, he presseth humility in the first place,

as the foundation of, and enterance unto, all the rest; *With all lowliness, and meekness, with long-suffering.*

4. There is an all-ness, or universality, which ought to be in the grace of lowliness, first, with respect to the subject: it ought to extend it self to the whole man, as being seated in the heart, *Philip. 2. -3-*. and kything in the outward carriage, *Luk. 14. 8.* Secondly, with respect to all objects: There must be humility towards God, *Acts 20. 19.* and humility also towards men, *Philip. 2. 3.* and towards all sorts of men, not only superiours (*Levit. 19. 32*) but inferiours also, *Job 31. 13.* Thirdly, with respect to the grace it self, as being without any mixture of the contrary vice, so far as is possible, *Psal. 131. 1, 2.* and daily growing up towards perfection, *2 Corinth. 7. 1.* Fourthly, with respect to all cases, so as it be exercised in prosperity (*Ezek. 16. 49.*) as well as adversity: for, saith he, *with all lowliness*, which note of universality, is oft made use of by the Apostle when he would expresse a great measure and degree of any gift or grace. See *1 Cor. 1. 5. Philip. 1. -9. Doct. 5.* Meekness and long-suffering, as they differ but little in substance, and are commendable graces in themselves; so they are notable means and helps to fit men for the duty of mutuall forbearance, in order to unity; in so far as they do render him, who is endued with them, gentle, affable and easie to be conversed with, and do moderate anger, which is ready to blow the bellows of contention and to stir up strife, *Prov. 15. 18.* for, he exhorteth unto meekness and long-suffering in order to forbearance and unity; *With meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another — endeavouring to keep unity.*

6. The best of men have their own infirmities, mistakes and failings, mutually jostling and rubbing upon each other, whereby they prove often unpleasant and burdensome one to another: for, this is supposed, while they are commanded to *forbear one another*. 7. It is the duty of Christians mutually to tolerate, and forbear one another, even when there are real grounds of displea-

sure : for , hereby a man overcometh himself , and his own corrupt nature , which thirsteth after revenge , *Prov. 16. 32.* hereby he overcometh and shameth his party who did him wrong , *1 Sam. 24. 17.* and keepeth Gods way in overcoming of him , *Rom. 12. 17- , 21.* and hereby a man also in some comfortable measure doth entertain peace with others , which otherwise upon every occasion would blow up and evanish : for , he enjoyneth this mutuall forbearance , as a remedy against the clashing of mutuall infirmities , and for entertaining of unity and peace ; *forbearing one another — endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit.* 8. This duty of forbearance is to be exercised to the person of our brother , rather than his faults : we are so to bear with his person , as to endeavour the bearing down of his sin , by admonition , (*2 Thess. 3. 15.*) reproof (*Levit. 19. 17.*) or correction , (*Prov. 13. 24.*) as we have otherwise access : and yet we are so to meddle with his faults , as in the meantime we may give due respect to his person , not irritating , or provoking his corruptions , while we intend to cure them : for , saith he , *forbearing one another* , which relateth to persons rather than to faults. 9. This duty of forbearance ought to be mutuall , and cannot in reason be expected by any from others to themselves , who are not ready themselves to repay it unto others ; seeing there is no man , who wanteth his own infirmities which call for forbearance , *Jam. 3. 2.* and that every man is obliged to do , as he would be done to by others , *Matth. 7. 12.* for , saith he , *forbearing one another.* 10. Love to our neighbour , whereby our heart and inmost affections are inclined and disposed towards him for his good , as they ought , as it is the great root and fountain of all duties towards others , without which they are but counterfeit shadows , and not real and sincere , *1 Cor. 13. 3.* So it doth in a speciall manner dispose and fit us for this duty of mutuall forbearance ; love covereth a multitude of sins , *1 Pet. 4. 8.* and maketh us bear with many things in the person loved ,

1 Cor. 13. 4, 7. which otherwise flesh and blood would not digest, 2 Cor. 12. 15. for, he holdeth out love as the fountain of all the rest, and especially of mutuall forbearance; *With all lowliness — forbearing one another in love.* 11. Whence it followeth, that this duty of mutuall forbearance ought to flow from a principle of love: and therefore, though we forbear from necessity, because we dare not do otherwise; or, from policie, untill we get opportunity to right our selves; or, from respect to our own ease only, lest by resenting injuries and miscarriages, we create trouble to ourselves; or, if we tolerate, connive at, and foster the sins of others, under a pretence of forbearing them, which is inconsistent with love to them, Lev. 19. 17. In all those cases, our forbearance is not acceptable service to God, nor yet in any case but when it is performed in love, and from a principle thereof: for, the forbearance he enjoyneth, is, *forbearing one another in love.*

Verf. 3. *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

HE doth now fall upon the main scope of this first part of the Chapter, exhorting them by all possible endeavours to keep the union of all the members of the Church, being united together by the holy Ghost, even in heart, and especially in things spiritual: all which are implied in this *unity of the spirit*, and that, in order to this unity, they would be of a peaceable disposition and deportment, to wit, so as not to make unnecessary ruptures and breaches upon every difference, whereby they should be firmly knit together, as the members of one body by its several ligaments and sinews. *Doct. 1.* As there are several sorts of union in the Church, and more particularly, besides that union which is amongst the members of the invisible Church, the bond whereof is the saving graces of Gods Spirit, (all of them being united to Christ, the head, by faith, Eph. 3. 17. and one to

another by love, *Col. 3. 14.*) There is an union also of the visible Church and the members thereof amongst themselves: and this is twofold, the one necessary to the being of a Church and being of a Church-member, so that a Church cannot be a Church, nor a man a member of the visible Church without it: the ty of which union is Gods Covenant with the visible Church, and the Churches professed imbracing and laying hold upon that Covenant, when offered in the Gospel, *Psal. 50. 5.* the other necessary to the welbeing of the Church, which is entertained by unity in judgement, (*1 Cor. 1. 10.*) in heart and affection, (*Act. 4. 32.*) by concurrence in purposes and actions, *Philip. 1. - 27.* So all those sorts of union, and union in all those respects, is to be sought after and entertained in the Church: for, the Apostle speaketh indefinitely, *Endeavouring to keep the union of the Spirit.* 2. The union which God requireth among His People, is not an union in sin or error, *Isa. 8. 12.* nor yet a civil union only, in things worldly, upon politick and civil interests, *Act. 12. 20.* nor yet a meer outside agreement, or living together only, *Psal. 55. 21.* but an union in heart and spirit, in things spiritual, and such an union, whereof the Spirit of God is author: for, therefore is it called the unity of the Spirit; *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit.* 3. The study of keeping peace and unity in the Church, is a most necessary duty, as being one prime instance of walking worthy of our vocation, spoken of, *ver. 1.* and yet such is the restlessness of some, and the prevalency of pride, passion, love to self-interest, and such like dividing lusts in others, that it is a duty most difficile to be practised, as being the result of all those graces, mentioned, *ver. 2.* and not attainable, even by those who are endued with those graces, except they apply themselves wholly to it, and use the utmost of their serious endeavours for that end, as is clear from the connexion of this verse with the two preceeding, and from the word in the original, rendered *endeavouring*, implying study, diligence and solicitude.

solitude. 4. Neither fair pretences for peace and union in the Church, not seconded, but rather contradicted, by practice, nor yet some carelesse endeavours, which are easily broken by appearing difficulties, are that which God will accept of at our hands as the duty required for preserving unity in the Church, where it is, or for restoring unity where it is already lost: there is no lesse called-for than the utmost of our serious endeavours for that end, so as we not only carefully eschew what may on our part give cause of renting, 1 Cor. 8. 13. but also, that we be not easily provoked when a cause of renting is given by others, 1 Cor. 13. 5. and that, when a rent is made, we spare no pains, nor stand upon any thing, which properly is our own, for having it removed, Gen. 13. 8, 9. and that we do not weary of those endeavours under small appearances of present success, 2 Cor. 12. 15. for, he biddeth them seriously *endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit*. 5. So many are the temptations arising from the corruptions of those among whom we live, to make us neglect this duty of keeping the union of the Spirit, that except we be of such peaceable dispositions as to digest many things one in another, which otherwise our corruptions would make much stir about, we cannot choose but fall at odds, rent assunder as so many disjoynted legs and arms, and upon every occasion involve our selves and the Church of Christ in several sad and dangerous broils and ruptures: for, he calleth *peace*, that is, a peaceable disposition, kything in all our deportment, the *bond*, or ligament, whereby the members of the Church are knit together; *in the bond of peace*, saith he. 6. Whatever differences may fall out among the members of the Church in the matter of opinion and judgment; yet they are not presently to break the bond of peaceable walking one with another by counteractings and factious sidings; but ought to study unanimous and joynt practice in those things wherein there is agreement; and where this peaceable deportment, flowing from a peaceable frame of

spirit, is, it tendeth much to preserve what remaineth of this spiritual unity, and to regain what is already lost : for, peace with man, which is the peace here spoken of, doth especially consist in our harmonious walking together, flowing from a peaceable frame of spirit, and is here enjoined as a special mean for *keeping the unity of the spirit, even in the bond of peace.*

Verf. 4. There is but one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.

HE doth now inforce the former exhortation to unity and peace, first, from an argument taken from those many things, which are one and the same in the Church and all the true members thereof : and for this end, doth reckon forth seven unities, which may be looked upon as so many bonds and ties of the essential unity, especially of the invisible Church ; and as so many arguments also, that therefore all, professing Christ, should not only labour to be one in all those, as they would evidence themselves to be sincere Believers and members of that blessed society ; but also improve their unity in these, for keeping unity and peace in lesser differences.

There are three of these unities, which are so many bonds and arguments, in this verse. The first is, that the whole Church is but one body, to wit, the invisible Church of real Believers is one mystical body, knit by faith to Christ their head, *Eph. 3. 17.* and by the bond of love among themselves, *Job. 13. 35.* And the visible Church is one politick body, *1 Cor. 12. 27.* conjoynd with Christ their head, and among themselves by external covenanting, (*Psal. 50. 5.*) and their serious professing of saving truths, *Act. 8. 12, 13.* with 23. and this body is but *one*, the invisible Church without all doubt is so, and the Catholick visible Church, made up of all Christians and true Churches in the world, is also one, because they have the same King, Laws, Word, Sacraments of admission and nutrition, which they visibly

sibly subject themselves to, and receive, and have a grant of the same common priviledges from God in the Gospel; and therefore they are all one visible Church.

2. There is but *one Spirit*, to wit, the third Person in the blessed Trinity, who, residing in Christ, the head, (*Isa. 61. 1.*) and in all the members (*Rom. 8. -9.*) as the soul in the natural body, doth by His gifts and graces animate, move and govern the Church, the body presently spoken of.

3. As the Church is one in these two; so their *hope*, following upon effectually calling, is also *one*. Where, by *hope* is not so much meant the grace of hope, as the object of that grace or good things hoped for, as *Col. 1. 5.* especially heaven and glory, the common inheritance of the Saints, *Col. 1. 12.* which they get not in hand, but only do possess it in hope, *Rom. 8. 24, 25.* And this *hope* is said to be *one*, to wit, for kind and substance, though there will be different degrees in glory, *Dan. 12. 2, 3.* Doct. 1. That the whole Church, and all the members thereof, are but one body, is a strong argument inforcing the duty of keeping peace and unity; it being no lesse absurd and prodigious for Christians to bite and devour one another, than if the members of one and the self-same natural body, should rise up against, tear and destroy one another: for, he inforceth the study of unity from this, *That there is one body.*

2. That any be a member of this one body, it is necessary he have the Spirit of God residing in him, whereby he may be quickened and acted, either by the saving operations of that one Spirit; otherwise he cannot be a member of the invisible body, *Rom. 8. 9, 10.* Or, by His common gifts and operations; otherwise a man, come to age and understanding, cannot be a member, no not of the visible body, *1 Cor. 12. 11.* for, he maketh this *one body*, and *one Spirit* of equal extent; *There is one body. and one Spirit.*

3. That the whole Church, and all the members thereof, are animated and acted by one and the self-same Spirit of God, is a strong motive to incite to the study of peace and unity, seeing divided lusts and practices are among those

those sins which grieve the Spirit. See ver. 30. 31. and that the difference of gifts and graces, wrought in us by that one Spirit, are given of purpose to make each member either usefull to another by that wherein it excelleth, or indigent of the help of others in that wherein it cometh short, and so to have the same care one of another, *1 Cor. 12.* from vers. 14. to the end : for, he presseth unity from this, that there *is one Spirit.* 4. As an external call by the ministry of the Word, and professed obedience thereto, is sufficient to make a man a member of the visible body, and to partake of the common operations of the Spirit ; So that any be of this mysticall invisible body, and quickened and acted by the saving operations of this one Spirit, it is necessary they be effectually called, and actually translated out of their natural state to the state of grace : for, he maketh their being of this one body, and having this one Spirit, to be necessarily joyned with their calling, to wit, their being of the visible body, and having the common operations of the Spirit with the external calling, and their being of the invisible body, and having the saving operations of the Spirit, with the inward and effectually calling ; *Even as ye are called.* 5. Though effectual calling be a work of Gods Spirit, there being none who comes to Christ except the Father draw him, *Joh. 6. 44.* yet none is compleatly called, untill he yeeld obedience to Gods call, and being wrought upon by God, doth actually work and concur with God for that end : for, what he called (*chap. 1. ver. 18.*) *Gods calling,* is here expressed to be their calling, because then only are we called when we obey the call of God ; *In one hope of your calling,* saith he. 6. As those, who are yet in nature, not effectually called, are in a hopelesse state, having no right to heaven and happinesse, and consequently no ground to hope for it, how big soever they be otherwayes in their vain and groundlesse hopes, *Deut. 29. 19, 20.* So effectual calling, doth open to the person called a large door of well-grounded hope, that whatever be his misery here,
yet

yet he shall be perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God for evermore hereafter : for, the called man only hath right to those rich promises, 2 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4. and God, by calling him, doth engage Himself to perform all that is promised to the called man, according to his hope, 1 *Thess.* 5. 23. with 24. for, therefore are those glorious things hoped-for called *the hope of our calling.* 7. The consideration of this, that called Saints are all of them aiming at one and the self-same prize of their high-calling, and shall live together in glory, should be a strong argument to make them live in peace and concord, while they are here. Their joynt aiming at one mark should make them of one mind and heart, especially seeing there is that in glory which will suffice all ; and their seeking of one thing needeth be no occasion of strife and emulation, but rather of unity in heart, mind and affection ; for, why should they strive together, who not only are brethren, *Gen.* 3. 8. but also are heirs together of the grace of life, 1 *Pet.* 3. -- 7. yea, heirs with Christ, *Rom.* 8. 17. and shall one day reign together in glory ? for, he presseth their keeping unity from this, that they were effectually called, and heaven and glory hoped-for would suffice all, and be enjoyed by all ; *Even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.*

Verf. 5. *One Lord, one faith, one baptism,*

IN this verse are other three of these unities, which are also so many bonds of, and incitements to, that unity exhorted unto, ver. 3. First, there is but *one Lord* ; which title, though it belong to all the three Persons in the blessed Trinity by right of creation, and accordingly is given to God under the name of *Master*, *Mal.* 1. 6. yet, seeing the unity of the Spirit is spoken to, ver. 4. and of God the Father, ver. 6. therefore it ought in this place to be ascribed to Christ, the second Person, to whom it is in a peculiar manner due by right of Redemption ; in so far as He hath redeemed the Elect from their natu-
rall

rall slavery and bondage under sin, Satan and Gods
 wrath, to be a peculiar people unto Himself, *1 Pet. 1.*
18, 19. and hereby hath purchased a right to rule over
 them, as Mediator, Lord-depute, and Administrator
 under the Father, *Philip. 2. 9, 10, 11.* And He is said
 to be but *one Lord*, there being none, to whom, either as
 partner, or substitute, He will communicate this His
 glory of dominion and lordship over His Church, ei-
 ther in whole, or in part, *1 Pet. 5. 3.* Secondly, there
 is but *one faith*, where, by *faith* may be meant the
 grace of faith, for that is also one, in respect of the au-
 thor God, *Col. 2. 12.* of the object, which it apprehendeth,
 the whole Word of God, (*Act. 24. 14.*) and
 especially Christ, and the promises, *Philip. 3. 9:* Yet, by
faith is mainly here meant the Doctrine of faith, pro-
 poned by God to be believed, as *Gal. 1. 23.* and this Do-
 ctrine is but *one*, because, though in the severall ages
 of the Church it was proponed diverse wayes, and with
 considerable variation in some weighty circumstances,
Eph. 2. 14, 15. yet in substance it hath been, is, and ever
 shall be the same, *Act. 15. 11. Heb. 13. 8.* and from
 Christs coming in the flesh, even to the end of the world,
 it is to remain the same, both for substance and circum-
 stance, *Heb. 12. 27, 28.* and though there be different opi-
 nions in the Church about divine Truths revealed in the
 Scripture, which occasioneth different faiths, (See ver.
13.) Yet there is only this one faith allowed by Christ,
 neither is there any other faith but this one in true Be-
 lievers, if we look to those Truths which are of abso-
 lute necessity to salvation; there is an agreement in those,
 and one and the same faith of those in all, whatever may
 be their differences about other inferiour Truths, *Act. 4.*
12. Thirdly, there is but one *Baptism*, whereby is
 meant neither the Baptism of affliction, *Mat. 20. 22.*
 nor of the extraordinary gifts of the holy Ghost, *Acts*
1. 5. but the ordinary Sacrament of Baptism, the pra-
 ctice whereof is enjoined by Christ under the Gospel,
Matth. 28. 19. And it is said to be *one*, not in respect
 of

of the persons administrating, or receiving this Ordinance, but of its nature and substance, as having the same author, Christ, *Matth.* 28. 19. the same outward element for kind, *Act.* 8. 36. the same way of administration enjoined, *Matth.* 28. 19. the same ends and uses towards those who are baptized, *Rom.* 6. 3. 4. *Doct.* 1. All these, who are of this one body, animated and acted by this one Spirit, and have well-grounded hope of glory, they must, and do subject themselves to Christ, as Lord, in so far as they are ruled by His Laws, *Act.* 9. 6. and patiently submit to His corrections and chastisements, *Heb.* 12. 6. 7. for, He maketh their being of one body, *having one spirit and one hope*, and their subjection to this *one Lord*, of equal extent; *one Lord*, saith he. 2. The consideration of this, that the whole Church, and all the Members thereof, are subject to the dominion of one Lord and Master, Christ Jesus, is a strong argument for inforcing this duty of keeping unity and peace among themselves; this being a duty, which not only he did presse most vehemently upon His followers, when He was about to leave the world, and depart from them, *Job.* 13. 34, 35. but also did most earnestly intreat the Father for, even that they might be all made one in Him, *Job.* 17. 21, 22. Besides, what a shame is it for the Servants of one Master to fall at odds among themselves, and thereby neglect their Masters work committed to them? for, he presseth the study of unity from this, that there is *one Lord*. 3. The Law, by which the Lord Christ will have His subjects ruled and governed, is not searched out, and known by sense or naturall reason, but, being revealed in the Word, it is laid hold upon by faith, and credit given to it, because of His authority who hath revealed it: for, so much may be gathered from his making mention of *faith*, or the Doctrine of faith, immediately after he had spoken of the Lord Christ; *one Lord, one faith*, saith he. 4. The consideration of this, that the whole Church, and all the true and lively Members thereof, do professe one and the

the same fundamentall Truths revealed in Scripture, as the only object of saving faith, and way to salvation, ought to be a strong motive for keeping concord and unity in all other things, which otherwise might occasion dissention and strife. This agreement in the main, in the journeys end, and the necessary way, which leadeth to it, should make them ashamed to fall at odds and strife about other things of lesse importance and moment: for, he presseth unity from this, that there is *one faith*. 5. The wise Lord hath judged it fitting to add the Sacraments, as seals unto the Doctrine of faith and salvation, contained in Scripture; that hereby we may be the more enabled to take up and understand that Doctrine, and be the more affected with it, as having the purpose of it, not only exhibited and represented to our ear in the Word, but to our eye also in the Sacrament, and that we may be the more confirmed in the truth of that Doctrine, as having not only His word and writ for it, but also His seal and pledge: for, after mention made of the Doctrine of faith, he presently addeth there is *one Baptism*. 6. The Lord hath added Sacraments to the doctrine of faith, not only for the reasons mentioned, but also for engaging the party receiver unto such duties as the Doctrine of faith doth presse upon him; a Sacrament being as a military oath, whereby we bind our selves to fight under the Lords banner, and in all things to be for Him: for, he doth presse them to duty, even to keep unity, from this, that they were partakers of this *one Baptism*. 7. The consideration of this, that the Church and all the Members thereof are dedicate to God, in one and the same Sacrament of Baptism, unto the receiving whereof, all do accord, is a strong motive to make them keep peace and unity in other things, seeing this onenesse in Baptism doth imply our communion in all other things, which are signified and sealed unto us by that Sacrament, which are all those things wherein our salvation is most nearly concerned, and that by Baptism we are solemnly engaged

to go about our Master's work, *Rom. 6. 4.* and so to eschew all renting, and falling out among our selves, by which His work is much retarded: for, he maketh this another argument to enforce unity, that they did all partake of *one Baptism*. Only know, that though we are not to re-baptize those who are baptized by schismaticall and hereticall Churches, even though they err in some fundamentall truths, so long as the substantiall parts of Baptism are preserved, though mixed with much of their own superstitious trash, and therefore in some respect we may be said to have one common Baptism with them; yet, it doth not follow hence, that we are tied to keep unity with them simply and in all respects. We are only hereby, tied to seek union with them, not by joyning in their schism, or damnable heresies, but by labouring to reclaim them from those: and if they be one in all the other essentiall ties and bonds of union here mentioned, as of having one Lord, one faith, &c. this oneness of Baptism doth engage to be willing, and endeavour, for our part, to keep the bond of peace with them in other things: for, those seven unities, or bonds, and arguments, are not to be taken separately, but joyntly, as to the pressing of unity: yea, and though they be not one in all the rest, yet it engageth us to own them in those things wherein they are right and owned by God, providing always we touch no unclean thing, *2 Cor. 6. 17.* In these respects, and with those limitations we deny not but unity should be kept with hereticall Churches, even the Church of *Rome* her self.

Verf. 6. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

HERE is the seventh unity, which is the last bond, or ty, of the Churches essentiall unity, and serveth also for an argument perswading to keep peace and unity in other lesser differences: which argument, is, first, pro-
pounded

pounded, to wit, all Believers have one common God and Father; for, though God, as Creator, is the God and Father of all the creatures, *Act. 17. 28, 29.* yet, seeing the Apostle is speaking of the union of the Church, and of all the members thereof, for urging whereof, this consideration of *one God and Father of all*, is used as an argument: therefore it seemeth He is called God and Father with respect to those, and chiefly to real Believers in the Church, to whom He is God and Father in a peculiar way. He is their *God*, by entering a gracious Covenant with them, whereof this is one article, that He shall be their God, *Jer. 31. 33.* that is, all in Him shall be forthcoming for their good: He is their Father also, by receiving them into the number, and by giving them a right unto all the privileges of the sons of God, *Job. 1. 12.* Now though this may be meant of all the Persons of the blessed Trinity; not only the first, but also the second, and the third, being the God and Father of Believers, *Job. 20. 28. Act. 5. 3, 4.* yea, all of them being one, and the same God, *1 Job. 5. 7.* Yet, seeing the Son and holy Ghost, are spoken of before, ver. 4, 5. the first Person is mainly to be understood here, who is called *one God*, not secluding the Son and holy Ghost, who are one and the same God in essence with the Father. but in opposition to idols, who are no gods, *1 Cor. 8. 6.*

This argument or bond of unity, is, next, enlarged in a description of this one God. 1. From His eminencie and dominion above all His creatures. 2. From His presence and powerfull providence, whereby he runneth through all the creatures, upholding them in their being, *Heb. 1. 3.* directing, disposing and governing all of them, *Dan. 4. 34.* and all their actions, *Psal. 135. 6.* Thirdly, from His special presence by the gracious operations of His holy Spirit with the truly Regenerate, whereby He is said to be *in all*, to point-out the intimacy and nearnesse of His presence in this respect above the former, and not simply *in all*, as formerly, but *in*

you all, meaning the believing Ephesians and such as they were. *Doct. 1.* As our strongest union is to be one in God, and our greatest happiness to have interest in this one God; So, by making use of Christ, as He is held forth in the Doctrine of faith, and sealed to us in the Sacrament, we may come up to plead interest in God: for, as he placeth this unity of having one God, in the last place, because it is most considerable; so he doth subjoyn it immediately to what he spake of *one Lord, one faith, one baptism: There is one God and Father*, saith he. 2. The unity of the God-head in the Trinity of the Persons, ought to be a strong motive to stir us up to unity among our selves; seeing there is nothing, wherein we can resemble God more, *Job. 17. 21, 22, 23.* for, the Apostle inforceth the study of unity from this, that there is *one God*. 3. This motive for keeping unity, is so much the stronger, and more moving, when we consider, that this God hath graciously become the common Father of all Believers through Jesus Christ, whereby they are all the sons and daughters of one Father, *2 Cor. 6. 18.* and so a matter full of shame for them to strive and contend among themselves, *Gen. 13. 8.* for, he strengthneth this argument for unity from this, that this *one God* is the *Father of all*, to wit, of all Believers. 4. Whatever be the other differences among Believers, and their discouragements arising hence, as that some are strong, some are weak, some rich, some poor, &c. yet this is a priviledge common to all, which may counterballance all their other inequality, even that they have all equal interest in one God, and that this one God is their common Father; and therefore will have a fatherly affection, (*Matth. 7. 11.*) pity, (*Psal. 103. 13.*) and care of all, *Matth. 6. 25, &c.* for, saith he, *there is one God, and Father of all*. 5. It is the duty of Ministers, when they are pressing duty to God upon people, and of people, when they would charge sense of duty to God upon themselves, to set forth and be much taken up with Gods excellency and greatness;

nesse; this being a singular mean to engage the heart unto high esteem of Him, and from esteem to serve and honour Him, *Mal. 1. 6.* for, the Apostle, pressing upon these Ephesians the duty of unity, doth hold Him forth in His glory and greatnesse; *Who is above all, and through all.* 6. Gods soveraignity and greatnesse, doth not mar His low condescendency to supply the emptinesse and necessities of His creatures: for, though he be *above all* in dignity; yet He is *through all*, upholding and over-ruling all by His powerfull providence. 7. Whatever God is by His common providence unto all His creatures, He is all that, and much more to His own called people and real Believers: for, He is *through all* by His common providence; but besides that, saith he, *He is in you all*, to wit, by the presence of His Spirit and speciall grace. 8. From all those seven unities joyntly considered, and the Apostles scope in all, *Learn, 1.* The essentiall unity of the Church, which cannot be broken, the Church remaining a true Church, and the many things, wherein there is of necessity an agreement that way, is a strong argument to enforce the study of unity and peace in other things of lesse concernment: for, the Apostle doth here presse unity, by reckoning seven unities, wherein they did agree, as if he had said what a shame is it for you, who are so many wayes *one*, to rent in pieces for those things, which comparatively are just nought? 2. So near and intimate is that conjunction of true Believers, so many strong and indissoluble are these spirituall bonds, by which they are knit together among themselves, that, if they were duely pondered, the hearts of those who fear the Lord, could not chooseth but be mutually enlarged, and their affections inflamed one to another, as to their dearest friends: yea, the most strict of civil, carnall and naturall bonds, should not bind so firmly as those, *Matth. 12. 48, &c.* for they are *one body, one spirit, have one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God.* And what conjunction or union can be so firm, as what is grounded upon all those?

Vers.

Verſ. 7. *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Chriſt.*

Hitherto the Apoſtle hath inforced the ſtudy of unity, by an argument taken from thoſe things that are one and the ſame in the Church and all the true members thereof. Now, followeth the ſecond argument from thoſe things which are not one in all, but diverſe almoſt in every one, to wit, the diverſity of gifts and graces beſtowed by God upon the ſeverall members of the Church: which diverſity alſo he ſheweth doth tend to union, becauſe, firſt, all thoſe ſeveral gifts and their diverſe meaſures, do come from one and the ſame author, to ver. 12. Secondly, they are all given for promoting one and the ſame end, to ver. 17. And, 1. in this verſe by way of correction, and pre-occupation of an objection, he holdeth forth Chriſt, as the author of all thoſe gifts and different meaſures, to this purpoſe, that notwithstanding of what he ſaid of thoſe many things, wherein they were one; yet there were other things, wherein they did differ, which nevertheleſſe were ſo far from diſſolving in reaſon the bond of union, that upon the contrary they did contribute much for keeping of it firme; in ſo far as, though every true member of the Church had his own peculiar grace, and in ſome reſpects, either as to the ſubſtance, or meaſure of the grace, differing from the grace of others; yet all thoſe different graces of the ſeveral members, are beſtowed by one and the ſame Chriſt, and received in the meaſure and degree which ſeemeth good unto Chriſt the giver to preſcribe and meaſure out unto every one: where by *grace*, is not meant Gods favour, or grace freely beſtowing, as in other places, (See upon *Ephes. 2. 8.*) but the fruits flowing from this grace, to wit, grace freely given, as appeareth from the inſtance given (ver. 11.) of this grace in the miniſteriall gifts and offices: Which graces are of two ſorts, Firſt, ſaving, which are only in the

regenerate, called *grace*, because they flow from, and are evidences of Gods grace and favour, 1 *Job*. 4. 19. Secondly, common gifts, called *grace*, *Eph*. 3. 8. because they are freely given, 1 *Cor*. 4. 7. The latter whereof is here chiefly meant, as appeareth also from the instance given, ver. 11. because it is only in those common gifts and graces, wherein real Believers do differ, as to the substance of them, some being given to one, and some to another, 1 *Cor*. 12. 8. whereas all have one and the same saving graces, 2 *Pet*. 1. 1. although they differ also in the measure and degree received of those, 1 *Job*. 2. 13. In which respect, even saving graces may be also here meant. *Dott*. 1. Though the Lord is not pleased to bestow upon all the Members of the Church an equal measure of gifts and graces; yet He giveth to every one some gift and in some measure, and those either the common gifts of His Spirit, as to all the Members of the Church visible come to age, and the right use of common reason, 1 *Cor*. 12. 11. Or, saving grace also, as to all the truly regenerate, 2 *Pet*. 1. 3, 4. for, he saith, *unto every one of us is grace given*. 2. The Lord is pleased to dispense His graces and gifts to every one, not in the same, but in a different measure, so that though the same saving grace for substance be given to all the truly regenerate: yet, it is not given to all in the same measure, nor yet to any in any measure, who are visible Professors only: and though all have some common gifts, whereby in some measure they may be made profitable in their station to the body, yet none hath all gifts, nor all the same offices, wherein they may exercise their gifts, ver. 11. nor yet do all receive the same measure of those common gifts: for, so much is implied, while he saith, *Grace is given according to a measure*. 3. The greatest degree of gifts and graces, which God bestoweth upon any, is far below that fulnesse of grace which is in Christ: He giveth unto none so much, but there is alwayes somewhat wanting, and they who have received most, are capable of receiving more: for, their receiving

receiving grace according to a measure, implyeth their receipts are capable of increase, and a difference, as to this, between their receipts and Christs, *Joh. 3. -34. To every one is given grace according to that measure.* 4. The want of some excellent gifts bestowed upon others, or of that excellent measure of saving graces, which others have, doth not argue a man unregenerate, or wholly destitute of saving grace: for, the Apostle sheweth that even those who had one hope, Lord, Faith, God and Father, and consequently had saving grace, ver. 4, 5, 6. were not all gifted with one and the same, but with a diverse measure of gifts and graces, while he saith, *But to every one of us is grace given according to the measure.* 5. Diversity of gifts in the Church, and diverse measures of saving grace, are an ordinary occasion of division and strife; in so far, as these dividing lusts of pride, contempt, envy, discouragement, are apt to take occasion to stir and vent themselves from those different measures: for, the Apostle his entering upon this argument for union from the diversity of gifts by the adverbative particle *But*, doth imply that they were prone to take occasion to rent upon that diversity, and therefore he doth joyntly preoccupy an objection against union, and bring an argument for it; *But unto every one of us is grace given.* 6. Whatever be mens pronenesse and inclination to rent and divide because of different receipts and measures; yet that same diversity, if well considered, would be found to be one of the strongest ties and bonds of union; in so far as hereby none, no, nor the most eminently gifted, can say he hath no need of others, but every one are made mutually indigent of one anothers help, and even the meanest in some measure furnished to be helpfull unto others: (See *Paul* proving this excellently from the similitude of the different members in the natural body, *1 Cor. 12. 14, &c.*) for, the Apostles scope in this and the following verses, is to enforce unity from the diversity of gifts and graces amongst the Members of the Church; *But unto every one of us is*

grace given. 7. This doth also inforce the study of unity from this ground of diversity of gifts. if we consider, that all we have of that kind, is freely given, and therefore we are not to be puffed up with it, nor to abuse it, contrary to the mind of the giver; and that both our gifts and measures, however diverse, do yet come from one rise, fountain and author, and therefore we ought to be one in making use of them; and that this one author is the Lord Christ, God Man. Mediator, in whose hands are all things given of the Father, *Mat. 11. 27.* that He may dispense to whom, and in what measure He pleaseth, and therefore we are not only not to quarrel for our own measure, it being His allowance, who doth all things well and wisely, *Mark 7. 37.* but also ought to employ our gifts and severall measures for the edification, and not the renting of His body, which is the Church: for, the Apostle inforceth unity from the diversity of gifts upon those considerations, that they were given by one and the same Christ; *But to every one is grace given, according to the measure of the gift of Christ.*

Verf. 8. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

THe Apostle, secondly, in this first branch of the second generall argument for union, from the diversity of gifts, doth confirm, from *Psal. 68. 18.* what he presently said, that Christ is the author and bestower of all graces and gifts with their different measures. In which place of the Psalm, *David* doth look through the ark, a type and shadow, to Christ the substance, and in a propheticall way, speaking of things to come as already past, to point-out the certainty of their performance, he doth foretell that Christ should, in a triumphant manner, *ascend up on high*, or unto the heighest heavens (See *ver. 10.*) and that at, and by vertue of His ascension, He should, first, *lead captivity captive*, that is, as he had upon the crosse soiled His

His many enemies, and begun to triumph over them, Col. 2. 15. So in His ascension He should continue the triumph, evidently declaring, that He had given a total rout to all the spiritual enemies of His Church and Kingdom. The expression used to set forth this purpose, hath in it an allusion to conquerors, who, in their triumphing solemnities, used to drive their captive enemies before their own triumphant chariots. See this expression used in the same sense, *Judg.* 5. 12. And, secondly, following the same allusion to triumphing conquerors, who used to divide and scatter the spoil, and other magnificent gifts among the applauding Citizens and Soldiers, he sheweth that Christ should at, and by virtue of His ascension, pour-forth and distribute a large measure of gifts and graces upon His Church and severall members thereof: which prophesie, the Apostle, citing the place with some variation of the words, but keeping close to the sense and purpose, doth shew, was now fulfilled by Christ; and consequently, that Christ is the bestower of all graces and gifts with their different measures, as was affirmed, ver. 7. *Dott.* 1. Ministers ought to hold forth nothing for truth, or presse nothing as duty upon the Lords people but what they may confirm and prove to be such from the authority of God speaking in Scripture: yea, and it is their duty sometimes to bring forward their proof, by making expresse mention of it: for, thus doth *Paul* confirm what he spake, ver. 7. by a testimony cited from the Psalms; *Wherefore he saith*, that is, *David*, or the Spirit of God, speaking by *David*, *saith*. 2. As there was much of Christ revealed in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, though but darkly, and under a vail of types and ceremonial shadows; So He was revealed and spoken-of in those Scriptures as true God and Jehovah: for, that which is said, *Psal.* 68. was spoken of God, even Jehovah, as appeareth from ver. 4. and all alongst, which *Paul* sheweth here was fulfilled in Christ; *Wherefore he saith, he hath ascended, &c.* 3. Though the very

words and phrase of Scripture, are much to be thought of and closely adhered unto so far as is possible; lest by our unnecessary casting of Scripture-purpose in an affected strain of words unknown to Scripture, we lose at length the purpose with the words, *2 Tim. 1. 13.* Yet, the sense and meaning of Scripture, is mainly to be sought-after and kept in remembrance, so that though we do not call to mind the very words of such a Scripture, but only the sense, meaning and purpose of it, we may draw comfort, or information from it, or make use of it otherwayes; for, the Apostle here, as oft elsewhere, doth not so much adhere to the precise words, as to the sense of that Scripture which he cites, in so far as where in the Psalm it is said, *Tbou hast ascended, and received gifts for men*, to wit, He received them to be given to men, it is here, *When He ascended, and gave gifts unto men. 4.* Our Lord Jesus Christ, having finished the work which was given Him to do on earth, *Job. 17. 4.* did locally ascend unto heaven, carrying His humane nature up thither, *Act. 1. 9, 10.* that so He might be exalted in that glory, which He had before the world was, *Job. 17. 5.* and take possession of heaven in our name, *Eph. 2. 6.* and there prepare a place for us, *Job. 14. 2.* for, saith he, *When He ascended up on high, 5.* As Christ did engage in a warfare on our behalf with many strong and potent enemies, to wit, the devil, the world, sin, death and hell; So He hath carried the day of all, and gained an absolute compleat victory over all, in so far, as, though the Godly must have a battel with these, *Eph. 6. 12.* yet Christ the Head of Believers, is now above the reach of hazard from enemies, and consequently Believers in their Head; yea, and they themselves are above all hazard also, in so far as all their enemies cannot mar their salvation, *Rom. 8. 35, &c.* Sin and Satan doth not reign in them, *Rom. 6. 12, 14.* death hath lost its sting towards them, *1 Cor. 15. 55.* and become a passage unto life, *Philip. 1. 23.* for, by this captivity, which Christ led captive, is meanged not those whom

whom He delivered from captivity, but whom He fought against, brought in captivity, and triumphed over, even all His and our spiritual enemies; *He led captivity* (or, a multitude of captives) *captive*. 6. The constant opposition, which Satan raiseth against the Church and Kingdom of Christ, doth not so much flow from any principle of hope in him to prevail in that wofull work, as from his inveterate blinded malice against the salvation of sinners, so that he cannot but malign and oppose it, though he know he cannot mar it: for, at Christs ascension he could not but know, that by all his malicious cruel actings against Christ, he had effectuate nothing but his own eternal shame and confusion, seeing that Christ did thereby openly declare *He had led captivity captive*. 7. As those, for whom Christ did purchase any good or advantage by His death, and did manifest His purchasing good for them by His ascension, were men, and not devils; So not only saving graces, which are given to the Elect only, but also common gifts, are a part of His purchase, which are given sometimes to reprobates for the good and edification of His Church, *Matth. 7. 22, 23.* for, both these are comprehended here under *gifts*, which being purchased by His death, He did at His ascension in a larger measure than formerly *give unto men*, and to men indefinitely, even to rebels, *Psal. 68. -18.*

Verf. 9. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)

THe Apostle doth, thirdly, comment upon, and apply the cited testimony. And, first, he sheweth what Christs ascending unto heaven (to wit, by His own divine power, otherwise the Apostles inference in this place should not hold) did presuppose, as necessarily foregoing, even His previous humiliation and abasement in all its steps, expressed by His *descending to the lower parts of the earth*; where, the *lower parts* are to be under-

understood, by comparing not the parts of the earth among themselves, but earth with heaven, the earth being the lowest part of the world; and particularly, it pointeth either at His conception in the womb of the Virgin (See conception so expressed, *Psal.* 139. 15.) or at His burial (expressed by a like phrase, *Matth.* 12. 40.) wherein the Apostle's scope is not only to prove, that the former testimony is pertinently cited, and applyed to Christ, but also to presse humility in order to unity and peace from Christs example, as *Phil.* 2. 7. Now, Christ is said to have *descended*, not properly and locally, as man, (for, before His incarnation He was not man) but as God, and therefore not properly by changing place, but improperly, and with respect had to His state, by taking on the humane nature upon earth, under the infirmities whereof He did for a time hide His divine glory, so that very little of it did appear, and to some few only, *Isa.* 53. 12. *Doct.* 1. Sacred Scripture is a great depth, containing much more than what is obvious at the first view; and therefore we are to advert not only to that which is expressly said in Scripture, but what may be drawn from it by direct and just consequence: for, *Paul* doth so look on this testimony of Christs ascension, as finding another great Truth concerning His previous humiliation lurking under it, and by just consequence deducible from it, while he saith, *Now that He ascended, what is it but that He first descended?* 2. It is not enough for Ministers to cite Scriptures for confirmation of those Truths which they hold forth to the Lords People, except the Scriptures cited be pertinent, and the pertinency of them be also made clear and obvious: for, *Paul*, having cited a Scripture to confirm somewhat which he said of Christ, doth prove the Scripture cited doth speak of Christ, because it implyeth previous descending and humiliation in the partie spoken of, which can agree to none other of the Persons of the blessed Trinity, but to Christ only; *Now that He ascended, what is it but that He descended?* 3. Such was the love of Christ

Christ to lost sinners, *Job. 15. 13.* and to the glory of His own and his Fathers mercy to be manifested in their salvation, *Job. 17. 4.* that He did willingly lay aside His glory, which He had with His Father before the world was, *Job. 17. 5.* by assuming the nature of man to Himself, and suffering therein the utmost of misery and grief which the malice of men and devils could inflict, and which seemed good unto the Father, in order to the satisfaction of provoked justice, to inflict, *Heb. 10. 7.* for, all this is implied in His descending; and saith Paul, *Now that He ascended, what is it but that He descended?* 4. Then do we study and know Christs exaltation aright, when we do also seriously consider, and think upon His previous humiliation and abasement: for therein we may see, not only how low He stooped for our good, but also that He hath fully accomplished whatever He undertook, and is now absolved, *Job. 17. 4. 5.* and that the Lords usuall way is with His own, as it was with Christ, to make their deep humiliation and lowliness of mind go before their highest exaltation and honour, *Prov. 15. 33.* for, Paul doth read previous humiliation in Christs exaltation, and thinks upon both joyntly; *Now that He ascended, what is it, but that He descended?* 5. Then do we think upon Christs humiliation and abasement aright, when we consider it in its greatest depth and lowest step unto which He demitted Himself, even to the lowest parts of the earth: for therein we may see the greatness of His love, the depth of our misery, and the full sufficiency of the price paid by Christ in the state of His humiliation, in order to our delivery; *He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth:* by which is not meant the place of the damned, nor any place near to that, where the souls of the Patriarchs were before Christs death, as the Papists affirm; this being contrary to Scripture, affirming that Christs soul was after death to be in heaven, *Luk. 23. 43.* and that the souls of the Patriarchs were there also, *Luke 16. 22, 23, 25, 26.* but hereby, as I shew in the exposition,

exposition, is meant His conception and buriall, with all the other steps of His humiliation interveening.

Verſ. 10. He that descended, is the ſame alſo that aſcended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.)

THe Apoſtle, in the explication and application of the cited testimony, doth, next, shew what it expressly holdeth forth, to wit, Christs ascension; and illustrates it from this, that the person who ascended, though now made man, was the same with him who descended to take on the nature of man. 2. That He ascended to the highest heavens, the seat of eternall glory, *far above those visible heavens*, not only in situation, but also in duration and glory, and are called the heaven of heavens, (*1 King. 8. 27.*) the third heavens, (*2 Cor. 12. 3. 4.*) and sometime simply by the name of heavens, *Act. 3. 21.* And, thirdly, from the end of His ascending, even to *fill all things*, not all places, with His bodily presence, (for Him must the heavens contain, *Act. 3. 21.*) but that He might fulfill all prophecies concerning Himself, and all those parts of His mediatory Office, which were yet to be performed in heaven: and particularly, that He might fill His Church, and all the members thereof, (which are His *all*, even His whole body, *Job. 6. 45.*) with a large and plentiful measure of the gifts and graces of His spirit, *Job. 7. 39.* according as was foretold in the cited testimony. *Doct. 1.* The distinction of natures in Christ after His incarnation, doth not infer a distinction of persons in Him; He remaineth one person still: for, the Apoſtle speaketh of Him after incarnation, as of one; *He that descended, is the ſame alſo that aſcended.* 2. Jesus Christ remaineth one and the same person after His assuming the humane nature unto Himself with that which He was before, so that neither is the person of God-man, Mediator, any third thing, made up, or compounded of both those natures, neither did the humane nature add any thing, before want-

ing, to make up, perfect, or work any alteration in the personall substance of the Son of God: only the humanity of Christ, being destitute of any personal substance of its own, is, as it were, ingrafted in the second person of the God-head, the Son of God, and doth subsist in Him: for, *Paul* sheweth that He who ascended, being now God-man, is the same with Him who descended before His incarnation; *He that descended, is the same also that ascended.* 3. By vertue of this personall union betwixt the divine and humane nature of Christ, there ariseth such a communion of the distinct properties of each nature, that those things, which are proper only to the one nature, are ascribed to the whole person: for, the same person is said here to descend and ascend, though He did *descend*, to wit, improperly, as God, not by change of place, but by assuming to Himself the humane nature, and did ascend properly by change of place, as he was man, and according to His humane nature; *He that descended, is the same also that ascended.* 4. Then do we profitably think on Christs exaltation, when we extend our selves unto the utmost to look upon the height of that honour and glory, unto which the humane nature, assumed by Christ, is now exalted; that so we may be the more taken up with admiration, *Heb. 2. 6, &c.* and the more encouraged in hopes of through-bearing, as knowing that our head and neer kins-man is already possessed of glory, and resideth there, as our great and powerfull Attorney and Agent to minde our everlasting concerns, as His own, *Heb. 7. 25.* for, *Paul* holdeth forth His exaltation to be considered thus, when in stead of what was said in the Psalm, *He ascended up on high*, he saith here, *He ascended up far above all heavens.* 5. Though Christ did furnish His Church with a competent measure of gifts and graces, even before His ascension or incarnation, *Heb. 1. 1.* yet, it pleased the Lord to suspend the pouring forth of His Spirit in such a large and plentiful measure upon His Church both of Jews and Gentiles, untill

untill Christ, having overcome and spoiled principalities and powers by His death, had risen again, ascended, and taken actuall possession of His Kingdom; that so the glorious state of His Church and subjects, as it now is under the Gospel, might not go before, but follow after the glory of their King and Head: for, saith he, *He ascended, that He might fill all things.* 6. The way of Christ with His own, especially with His Church in generall, is such, that what is sad and grievous in it, in one respect, is joyous and advantageous unto them in another; for, Christs removall of His bodily presence, was sad to His Disciples, *Job. 16. 6.* and yet a forerunner of much good; *He ascended, that He might fill all things.* 7. So large, and inexhaustible is that fountain of fulnesse in Christ, our exalted Lord, that, though all His followers and subjects be but empty things in themselves; yet, He can fill, not only one, but all, and all as well as one, yea and He doth really fill them, even here, to wit, with a fulnesse answerable to their present state of child-hood and imperfection, a fulnesse of grace in respect of parts, though not of degrees: for, this was the end of His ascension, *that He might fill all things.*

Vers. 11. And He gave some, apostles: and some, prophets; and some, evangelists: and some, pastors, and teachers.

THe Apostle, fourthly, in this first branch of that general argument for union, confirmeth and illustrateth what he spake concerning diversity of gifts given by Christ, by giving an instance thereof, not in gifts, but in the severall Offices and Office-bearers in the Church: which is all one, as if he had given an instance in the variety of gifts, seeing Christ imployeth none in any office, but whom He doth furnish in some measure with gifts answerable to the employment. Neither doth he enumerate all those Office-bearers, which Christ hath appointed in His Church (See others besides, *1 Tim. 5. 17. Acts 6. 2, 3.*) but only so many as are sufficient
to

to his present scope, even those who labour in the Word and Sacraments, whose various gifts are most conspicuous in the spirituall edification of the Church. Of which he reckoneth five, and saith of them all, that Christ did give them at His ascension, though He did send forth some of those, to wit, the Apostles before then, *Matth.* 10. 1. *Job.* 20. 21. The reason whereof, is, because not only some were then added to the Apostles, as *Act.* 1. 26. *Act.* 9. 15. but also all of them were then solemnly installed, and publickly confirmed in their office by Christ, in His visible pouring forth the gifts of the Spirit in an extraordinary measure upon them, *Act.* 2. 3, 4. Of which five, there were three extraordinary Office-bearers to continue for a time only, first, *Apostles*, the severall characters of which office, see upon *Col.* ver. 1. doct. 2. to which this one is to be further added, that an Apostle behoved to have seen Christ in the flesh, *1 Cor.* 9. 1. Secondly, *Prophets* who those were, see upon *Eph.* 3. ver. 5. Thirdly, *Evangelists*, not those who wrote the History of the Gospel, whereof some were Apostles, as *Matth.* and *John*, but others, who being called mediately by the Apostles (*2 Tim.* 1. 6.) were their companions in travels, *Gal.* 2. 1, 3. and sent out by them, as occasion offered, to settle and water such Churches as the Apostles had planted; *1 Cor.* 3. 6. *1 Tim.* 1. 3. and there to remain, not constantly, but untill the Apostles should recall them, *2 Tim.* 4. 9. such were *Timothy*, *Titus*, *Sylvanus*, *Apollos* and *Tychicus*, &c. The other two are ordinary Office-bearers, *Pastors* and *Teachers*; I say, two, though the disjunctive particle *some*, be not cast in between them: for, they are distinguished, *Rom.* 12. 7. 8. and the exercise of their respective offices, is distinguished also, *1 Cor.* 12. 8. so that by the *Pastors* are meant those, who, besides their ability to open up the Text of Scripture in some measure, are chiefly gifted with the word of Wisdom, wisely, and powerfully to apply the Word for working upon the affections, as the matter requireth

requireth; and the *Teacher* is he, who is gifted with the word of Knowledge, or ability to open up the mind of God in Scripture, establishing Truth, and confuting Error, without insisting much upon particular application: which office, because of the Churches poverty, is confined to the schools, and the ordinary exercise of it before the people left upon the Pastor. *Doff. 1.* As the Father Son and holy Ghost are one and the same God; so they do all concur in one for bringing about the Churches good: and this in a speciall manner, by sending forth Ministers to feed the flock and furnishing them with competent gifts: for, what is here spoken of Christ, is some times ascribed to God the Father, *1 Cor. 12. 28.* and sometimes unto the holy Ghost, *1 Cor. 12. 11.* *And he gave some Apostles, &c.* 2. It is the prerogative of Christ the King and head of His Church, to appoint the severall sorts of offices, and Office-bearers in His Church: neither is it in the power of any whomsoever, whether Kings or Churches, to add to, or diminish from any thing appointed by Him herein: for, it is the prerogative of Jesus Christ to have given some, *Apostles; some, Prophets, &c.* 3. As Christ doth put none in office, but whom He furnisheth with gifts; so we are not to exercise our gifts in a disorderly way, but within the compasse of our stations, and in those offices unto which we are called by God: for, so much doth the Apostle teach, while, proving the variety of gifts, he giveth an instance in those diverse offices wherein those gifts are to be exercised, *And he gave some, Apostles; some, Prophets, &c.* 4. The gifts, which God bestoweth upon His publick Ministers for the work of the Ministry, are the prime and chief of all those gifts which the Lord Christ doth bestow upon His Church, and much to be preferred to the private gifts of others, in so far especially, as they are the ordinary mean appointed by God for working saving Grace, *Rom. 10. 14, 15.* for therefore is it, that the Apostle not only here, but else where, (*Rom. 12. 6. 1 Co. 12. 28.*) being to
give

give an induction of those various gifts, bestowed by Christ upon His Church, doth begin with, and insist mainly on those gifts, which are given to His publick Ministers and preachers of the Word; *He gave some, Apostles; some, Prophets.* 5. A Ministry sent by Christ, and sufficiently furnished with ministeriall gifts for the conscientious discharge of that calling, is a singular gift of God unto a people, whereby Christ doth supply the want of His bodily presence among them, and bringeth about the edification of His Church, as effectually as if He Himself were present upon earth, *Joh. 14. 12.* for, when Christ ascended up far above all heavens, *He gave*, in a special gift to His Church, and as it were in supply of His absence, *some, Apostles; some, Prophets.* 6. The Lord Christ hath never appointed such an office-bearer in his house as the Pope, whom Papists call the visible head of the universal Church on earth, supplying the room and place of Christ now absent in heaven; nor yet of a Lord-prelate, commonly called *Bishop*, who, according to the maintainers of that office, is one entrusted with the actual oversight of many Congregations, and of whole Provinces, with a degree of authority flowing from their office over and above all the Ministers of Jesus Christ within those bounds: for, if Christ had appointed those great Offices and office-bearers as necessary in His house, how should the Apostle have passed them over, not only in all other places, where he speaketh of this purpose, but also here, where he is reckoning forth those gifts and offices which Christ, ascending to heaven, hath appointed to supply in a special manner the want of His bodily presence upon earth? which without all doubt should be most supplied by those, if they were of His appointment: and therefore, though the office of ruling Elder and Deacon be not so necessary to be here mentioned; Yet, those great Offices, the mentioning whereof would have been so subservient to his purpose, could not be well omitted: Now, none of those are here; *for he gave some, Apostles; some, Pro-*

pbets, &c. 7. The Lord Christ hath not intrusted all with a publick office in His house, but some only, to whom the rest ought to submit themselves, and obey in the Lord, *Heb. 13. 17.* Neither are all Office-bearers intrusted with one and the same office; and therefore not indued with the same measure of gifts and parts, so that we are not to measure all by some, rejecting others, who come not up in all things to those: for, *He gave some, Apostles; some, Prophets; some, Evangelists, &c. some only,* and not all.

8. The Lord hath alwayes raised, and yet will raise up men in His Church according to what the exigence of the times requireth: and though we have not ground to look for men extraordinary, whether for gifts or office; Yet for men singularly assisted in their ordinary stations, when the important affairs of the Church do call for such: for, here, when there were extraordinary things to be done, the first foundations of the Christian Church to be laid, the Canon of Scripture to be compleated, the Jewish way of Religion, once established by God, to be put down, the Lord Christ sendeth forth extraordinary office-bearers, and extraordinarily assisted: for, to bring all this about, *He gave some, Apostles; some, Prophets; some, Evangelists,*

9. So wise and mercifull is the Lord Christ, that He doth not overburthen His servants too much, but where their work goeth beyond their strength, He hath sufficiently provided how a part of their burden may be taken on by others: for, the work of laying the foundations of the Christian Church, being too heaieve for the twelve Apostles, He did allow them co-workers and fellow-helpers, even the Prophets and Evangelists; *He gave some, Apostles; some, Prophets; some, Evangelists, &c.*

10. Whatever is done in the Church of Christ according to His order, though mediately by the hands of men, Christ will own it, as if it were done immediately by Himself: which holdeth especially in the Churches calling of fit men to the work of the Ministry, according to the order appointed by Christ: for, he maketh the calling

calling of ordinary Pastors and Teachers, though it be mediate only, and by men, to be from Christ, as well as the immediate extraordinary calling of the Apostles; *He gave some, Apostles; some Pastors and Teachers.* 11. As it is needfull that both the judgments of people be informed, and their affections wrought upon, and as God hath furnished His servants with answerable gifts for effectuating both; so we are not to despise either of those sorts of gifts, neither the sound, plain, able, teaching gift, though it be not so operative or taking upon the affections; nor yet the pithy, moving, pastoral gift that worketh upon the affections, though it be not accompanied with profound knowledge and great learning in those who have it: for, the Lord dispenseth both those gifts, and oftimes not to the same person; *He gave Pastors and Teachers.*

Verf. 12. *For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*

THE Apostle, having thus far enlarged himself upon the first branch of that general argument for union, taken from the diversity of gifts in the Church, to wit, because they all came from one and the same author, he doth now fall upon its second branch, inforcing unity notwithstanding the diversity of gifts and offices, because they are all given for promoting one and the same end: which end, is, first, propounded in this verse in three different expressions, all tending much to the same purpose, but with some difference in regard of three sorts of persons, to whom the ministerial function hath reference. First, in regard of the *Saints*, or people, the end of the Ministry is to *perfect* them, that is, to bring them out of that disorderly, disjoynted and confused frame, posture and condition wherein they are, and to fix them in a well-ordered, compact spiritual frame and state, which is attained when they are joyned to Christ by faith, and one to another by love: for, the word sig-

nifieth to prepare, fit and dispose things in an orderly frame, *Rom. 9. -22.* and especially such things as were before rent asunder, *Mark 1. 19.* or out of their own due place and order, as disjoynted members, with allusion to which, the word is used, *Gal. 6. 1.* Secondly, in regard of themselves who are in office and accordingly gifted: the end of their gifts and office, is, that they may labour diligently in all the duties of their calling; which is only a subordinate end, and relative to the other two as a mean. Thirdly, in regard of Christ, it is that all Believers, being so perfected and joyned together, as stones of a building, by the work of the Ministry, may become His mysticall body, to whom He will perform all the duties of an head. *Doct. 1.* That severall offices and various gifts are all given for promoting one and the same end, and for promoting those ends in particular, which are expressed in the Text, is a strong argument to keep off emulations and rents, because of those, and to endeavour after unity and peace; seeing division and strife do marre the spirituall orderly frame of the Church, divert from the main work of the Ministry, and obstruct the edification of the body of Christ, and so do crosse those main ends in all respects, for which all gifts and offices are given: for, the Apostle inforceth unity from the diversity of gifts and offices, upon this consideration, that all are given for the promoting of those ends, even *for perfecting the Saints for the work of the Ministry, &c.* 2. That publick gifts and gifted Ministers are sent to, or continued in any place by God, is for the sake of the Elect there, and to bring about their salvation: so that though the Word be preached and Ordinances dispensed, even to reprobates to make them the more inexcusable, and because they are joyned in one civill society and externall Church-fellowship with the Elect; yet if God had none of His own to be wrought upon by the Ministry in a Congregation, Place, or Nation, it is more than probable He should not send His Ordinances there at all: for, all the ends

ends of Christs sending a Ministry, do relate chiefly to the Elect, even for *perfecting the Saints, for edifying the body of Christ*. 3. Whatever outward, civill order may be among a people destitute of the Gospel; yet as to their spirituall concerns, they are wholly out of frame, rent and torn, even a disorderly confused masse and heap, as being at enmity with God, *Rom. 8. 7.* and destitute of all sound, solide and spirituall unity among themselves, *Rom. 3. 13, 14, 15.* for, seeing the end of the Ministry is to *perfect the Saints*, that is, to bring them to an orderly spirituall frame, it is supposed, that before a Ministry be sent unto them they are not perfect, but wholly out of frame. 4. Even the Elect already converted, are sometimes out of frame, their spirituall faculties, as it were, disjoyned and unable to move, or stir, *Psal. 51. 10.* and one of them rent asunder from another through prejudices, passion, love to self interest, and such like, *Act. 15. 39.* for otherwise there should be but small need of a Ministry toward them, the great end whereof, is to place those things which are disorderly in a right frame, to joyn together things which are rent asunder, to recover strength and motion to these things which are rendered weak, by being out of their right place, as the word, rendered *perfecting*, doth signifie; for *perfecting the Saints*. 5. A publick Ministry and the exercise thereof, is the ordinary mean appointed by the Lord Christ for perfecting the Saints and edifying the body of Christ, whether by converting those of the Elect who are yet in their unregenerate state, *Rom. 10. 17.* Or, by confirming and establishing those who are already converted, *Col. 4. 12.* and making them to grow, *Col. 1. 28.* or restoring them when they are overtaken in a fault, *1 Tim. 5. 20.* and therefore it is a most necessary ordinance, without which those great ends in an ordinary way cannot be attained: for, He maketh the ministeriall offices formerly mentioned, the means of *perfecting the Saints, and of edifying the body of Christ*. 6. The highest office that is enjoyed by any within the Church, is only a Ministry

nistry and service, and not a lordly domition over the flock of Christ: for, he calleth the forementioned offices, even the highest of them (the office of the Apostles it self not being excepted) a Ministry, or service; *for the work of the Ministry.* 7. Ministers are not called to idlness, or to live like lazie drones wasting the Churches revenue, without executing the office for which it is given. They are called to work and improve their talents and gifts in that laborious work of perfecting the Saints and edifying the body of Christ: for, this he maketh the end of those gifts and offices in regard of those to whom they are given, even the *work of the Ministry.* 8. The gaining of souls to God, and carrying on the work of grace in those who are gained to some perfection, doth meet with so much opposition, what from within, and what from without, what from men, what from devils, and what from a mans own heart, *2 Cor. 10.-4, 5.* that the ministeriall office which is imployed for bringing those about, is no easie task: It is a work, and such, as, though it be a worthy work, *1 Tim. 3. 1.* yet, it is a weighty and laborious work: a work that will take up the whole man, and being rightly minded, will give the painfull and consciencious Minister little time for any other work, *1 Tim. 4. 15.* for, he casteth this second end, relating to the Ministers themselves, in the middle betwixt the other two; because it relateth to them, as a mean to the end; and to shew, it is not naked gifts, or the credit of the office which will bring about those ends, but the painfull exercise and discharge of them; *for the work of the Ministry.* 9. The work of the Ministry, if rightly gone about, is an uniting work of the Church of Christ: Its great end, and to which all its other ends are subordinate, being to unite souls, as so many stones in a building, or as so many members in the body, first, to Christ the foundation of this building, and head of this body, by bringing them up to believe in Him; and next, one to another, by bringing them up to mutuall love, and all the duties

duties thereof, and especially to mutuall forbearance, and the study of unity and peace: for, he maketh this the great and last end of *the work of the Ministry*, even, *the edifying of the body of Christ*, that is, the Church: (See wherefore it is so called, chap. 1. 23.) The word *edifying* is borrowed from masons, whose great work is, having prepared the stones apart, to joyn them most firmly, both to the foundation and among themselves,

Verf. 13. *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulnesse of Christ.*

IN the next place, he doth severall wayes illustrate and explain what he presently spake of that great end intended to be brought about by the Ministry and ministeriall gifts. And first, he illustrateth it in this verse, from the term of its duration, by shewing how long (not all those forementioned offices, ver. 11. but) that work of the Ministry in edifying the body of Christ, spoken of, ver. 12. shall continue and last; The term whereof, in a word, is the day of Judgement: And it is set forth by three expressions, the latter whereof, is a further explication of the former, and all of them do hold forth that high degree of perfection, which the Church shall not obtain before that day; And first, he sheweth that work is to continue untill all the Elect (some whereof are not yet born, much lesse called, and some of those who are called, do differ in many things among themselves) do *come* or meet (for so the word may read) in that compleat unity, not only of opinion, but also, and especially of heart and affection, to be manifested in that most perfect and blessed communion and fellowship, which the Saints shall enjoy, both with Christ, and amongst themselves in glory, called the *unity of faith*, as having its first rise from faith; however faith, as to the distance from Christ implied in it, shall then cease, 1 Cor. 13. 12. which grace of faith

he describeth to be *the knowledge of the Son of God*; or, as the word signifieth, the *acknowledgement of Him*, which speaketh somewhat more than our simple knowing of Him, even a knowing Him as our own, and with a speciall application to our selves, and so as we give due honour, respect and reverence to Him: See upon chap. 1. ver. 17. doct. 10. Secondly, He sheweth what unity of faith he meaneth, even that which the Church and all her members shall attain to, being come to the state and degree of perfection in the life to come; which state is here called a *perfect man*, or a man come to full and perfect age; because that state shall be to the Church, and all her lively members, as their ripe and compleat age, in comparison of their infancy, childehood and growing age here in the world. Thirdly, he sheweth when the Church shall come to her ripe and manly age, to wit, when she attaineth that measure of perfection; (called her *stature*, with allusion to the ripe age of a man, when he is come to his full stature) That measure, I say, of perfection, which Christ shall fill them with in glory, or whereby Christ mysticall shall be fully compleat, there being none of His Members then wanting, and all of them come to their perfect growth, or a measure of perfection answering, though not in equality, yet in likenesse and conformity to that fulnesse of perfection which is in their head Christ, to whom all the members of this mystical body shall be in some measure conform in glory, 1 Cor. 15. 49. This stature of the fulnesse of Christ may be taken any or all of those wayes, for they all agree in one and the same measure of perfection. Doct. 1. The edification of the body of Christ, is a work that shall be continually in motion, and on foot, untill all that are given to Christ of the Father, no, not one being wanting, even all the Members of this mystical body, be effectually called and united with Christ the head, and among themselves, and every one of them attain to their full and perfect measure of spirituall growth, so, that Christ shall never want a Church of Believers

Believers, while the world endureth : for, the tearm, to which that edifying work, mentioned, ver. 12. shall continue, is, *untill we all come to the unity of the faith.* 2. The Ministry of the Gospel is a standing ordinance untill Christs second coming ; neither are there any other Church-offices to be given by Christ to the Church for edifying His body but those which are already given in the grant of the Gospel : and therefore those are to continue either more visibly or hidly in some one place or other, in despite of men and devils unto the end of the world, *Matth. 28. 20.* for, this work of the Ministry in edifying the body, spoken of, ver. 12. is to continue *untill we all come to the unity of the faith.* 3. There is none, no, not the most eminent Saints on earth, who are above the ordinance of the Ministrie, so as to stand in no need of it, or to be without reach of being bettered by it : even Ministers themselves must be wrought upon, and edified by this Ordinance, otherwise they do not what they ought in saving both themselves and others, *1 Tim. 4. 16.* for, even *Paul* reckoneth himself among those whom the Ministry was to have its due effects upon, while he saith, not *ye all*, but *we all come to the unity of the faith.* 4. As the Elect by nature are far removed from God, from Christ, and one from another ; So their great work, when once converted, should be, and in a great part will be, to tend and advance by degrees towards a compleat union and communion with God, and with one another in God, as the great scope they aim at, and the point or center, which they propose unto themselves to meet in : for, the former of those is supposed, and the latter expressed while he saith, *till we all come, or meet in the unity, &c.* 5. This perfect union and communion of all Believers. with God, and with one another in God, is not attained at the first ; yea, not in this life, nor before the resurrection : untill then there will be alwayes some alienation and distance, not only from God, *2 Cor. 5. 6.* but also among themselves, and that both in their judgements and affections,

affections, *1 Cor.* 13. 9. for, he saith, *till we come in the unity*: which implicth, there will be some time before we come at it, even till the Church be a *perfect man* in glory. 6. Diversity of gifts bestowed upon Ministers, and the exercise of them in the work of the Ministry, is the ordinary mean, appointed of God for working up the body of Christ to this unity; and therefore ought not to be occasion unto the people of strife and emulation, schism or faction, *1 Corinth.* 3. 4. much lesse should they be improven by Ministers for begetting, or entertaining divisions or rents, either among themselves, or in the Church of God, *Phil.* 1. 15, 16. for, he sheweth the work of the Ministry, (ver. 12.) diversity of offices (ver. 11.) and diverse measures of gifts and graces, (ver. 7.) are all given to promot this unity; and therefore ought not to raise division: *Till we all meet in the unity.* 7. The grace of faith, and the exercise thereof, is the way wherein the Saints do walk towards this blessed and perfect union; in so far, as faith uniteth us to Christ, and through Christ to God and one to another, chap. 2. 15. which union by faith, is a step towards, and endeth in, that perfect union and communion with God and all the Saints by sight, or sense, which shall be in glory, *1 Pet.* 1. 9. And therefore the exercise of faith, and closing with Christ, would mainly be pressed by Ministers, and sought after by people, as they would attain to unity, entertain it being begun here, or meet in that perfect unity hereafter: for, therefore is it called *the unity of faith*, as having its rise from that grace; *till we all come in the unity of the faith.* 8. As faith in Christ cannot be without the knowledge of Christ, and such a knowledge, as is a reall acknowledging of Him, implying application and high esteem of Him when he is known; So faith cannot find a sure foundation in Christ to rest on, while He be taken up, as God equal with the Father, and consequently endued with sufficient strength and worth for doing all those things, for which the Believer imployeth Him, for he describeth faith to be the *knowledge*, or, *know-*

Knowledge of the Son of God. 9. The Church and body of Christ, in respect of particular Believers, the Members of that body, hath its divine different periods of age, as the infancy of the Church and particular Believers, so called, because of their childish ignorance and infirmities: this age is spoken of, ver. 14. Next their youth and growing age, when they are making progresse in the way of grace towards perfection: this is mentioned, ver. 15. And, lastly, their perfect manly age, when grace is fully perfected in glory, spoken of in this verse. Only they have no declining, fading, or old age, but shall alwayes remain a perfect man unto all eternity, *1 Thess. 4. 17. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, unto a perfect man.* See the exposition. 10. As Believers ought to aim at no lower degree of perfection than conformity with Christ, their glorious head; so they shall at last attain unto it: they shall be holy, harmlesse, undefiled, separate from sinners, as He, *Heb. 7. 26.* above the reach of all tentations, as He, *Job. 14. 30.* their vile bodies made conform to His glorious body, *Philip. 3. 21.* and both soul and body confirmed in that glorious state, unto all eternity, even as He, *Rom. 6. 9.* that so there may be a due proportion between the head and body of mysticall Christ: and when all Believers are from the fountain of fulnesse in Christ thus filled with a fulnesse of perfection, in some measure answerable unto that which is in Himself, then, and not till then, hath mysticall Christ attained His just stature, proportion and fulnesse: He doth in a manner reckon Himself imperfect, empty and incompleat, so long as one member of His mysticall body is wanting: for, *Paul* maketh the measure of the Churches perfection, or manly and full stature, to be the fulnesse of Christ, to wit, that perfection, which, flowing from Christs fulnesse, shall compleat Christ mysticall, and be conform to that fulnesse of perfection which is in Christ: *Unto the measure of the stature of the fulnesse of Christ.*

Verſ. 14. *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftineſſe, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

HE doth illuſtrate the forementioned end of the Miniſtery, next, by ſhewing one chief fruit of that ſpiritually edification, unto which the work of the Miniſtery is ſubſervient, even the removall of, and preſervation from, that which is contrary to it, and namely from error and falſe Doctrines: the hazard whereof, together with the neceſſity of guarding againſt them, is ſet forth by three ſimilitudes: the firſt two do expreſſe the temper of thoſe who are ſurprized, or in danger to be ſurprized by error. Firſt, they are as *little children*, to wit, for ignorance of what is right, inconfiſtancy in their choiſe, and ſimplicity, or eaſineſſe to be deceived, and to credit all. Secondly, they are as ſhips deſtitute of ſkilfull maſters, tossed and carried this way and that way with the tide and contrary winds among the waves and rocks, even ſo are they with the tide and winds of contrary and diverſe Doctrines and opinions, ſometimes fluctuating and uncertain what to chooſe, ſometimes taken with one opinion, and preſently changing it with another. The third ſimilitude expreſſeth the way how ſuch are ſeduced unto error, to wit, by the pernicious ſubtility of ſeducers, ſet forth, firſt, more obſcurely, by a compariſon taken from the fraud or ſleight of gamblers, who have devices, by cogging a die, to make it caſt up any number they pleaſe; So do hereticks, by wreſting Scriptures, force them to ſpeak that ſeemingly which maketh for the defence of their error, 2 Pet. 3: 16. for, the word, rendered *sleight of men*, ſignifieth *the crafty deceiving of men*. Next, more plainly, while that ſleight, or deceiving, is called *cunning craftineſſe*, to wit, in hereticks and ſeducers: the word ſignifieth a ſingular dexterity to do miſchief of any kind, acquired by
long

long use and great meddling in all affairs. And lastly, he sheweth the end to which this cunning craftinesse doth tend, and that wherein it is exercised most, even in a subtle and compendious way of deceiving the simple and drawing them from truth to error: for, the words do read in *cunning craftinesse, tending to a compendious subtle art of deceiving*, or, to deceive by a compendious art. Hence *Learn*, 1. One singular mean ordained by God for preserving us from the infection of dangerous errors and subtle seducers, is the work of the Ministry; and therefore the work of Ministers is not only to presse holinesse, and to reprove vice, but also to contend for the truth, stop the mouth of gainsayers, and guard the Lords people against infection from dangerous errors: and people ought to cleave unto their faithfull Ministers, as they would be preserved from being made a prey to seducing spirits: for, *Paul* doth hold this forth as one fruit of the work of the Ministry, mentioned, ver. 12. *even that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine.* | 2. Spirituall edification, and walking towards perfection in glory, doth call for not only holinesse of life, but also orthodoxie in point of truth; heresie and error being as great impediments in that spirituall building, and as palpable deviations from the way to heaven and glory, as profanity and vice, *2 Pet. 2-1-* for, having spoken of that great end of the Ministry, the edification of the body of Christ, ver. 12. as the way to perfection in glory, ver. 13. he doth here speak of infection by error and heresie, as impediments of that edification, and therefore to be removed; *That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro.* 3. The most holy and able Ministers are not more ready to presse the sense of humane frailty, with the necessity of keeping a strict watch against it upon others, than they are to take with it, and to watch over it in themselves: for, even *Paul* includeth himself, while he saith, *that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro*: which implyeth an acknowledgement, that, at least, he

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was once such a childe, and that it was necessary for him, as well as others, to quit that childish temper.

4. As the renewed children of God are once babes in Christ, and weak in all the parts of the new man, even in knowledge, prudence, patience and other graces; so they must not be alwayes such, but are to be growing upwards towards perfection: for, the first of those is implied, and the other expressed, while he saith, *That we henceforth be no more children.*

5. Pronenesse to error and easinesse to be carried away with every doctrine, which pretendeth to Truth, is a mark of one who is not grown in grace, and but a babe in Christ, if he be renewed at all: for, he calleth those *children*, who are *tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.* 6. That errors and heresies are not lesse damnable and dangerous than other sins, appeareth from this, that the souls hazard from these is expressed by the hazard of masterlesse ships, tossed by contrary winds among rocks or beds of sand, while he saith, *tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.*

7. The spirit of error is alwayes turbulent, and when suffered to walk abroad, doth raise most strange commotions, both in the publick state of the Church, while hereby the lovers of Truth are called publickly to contend for it, *Jude* ver. 3. and in the hearts of private Christians, chiefly those who are weak and unsettled, and hereby made to fluctuate among the rocks of several opinions, and sometimes at last to split upon some one error or other, *Gal.* 1. 6. for, so much is implied, while he compareth heretical doctrines to the boisterous winds which drive the ship of the Church *to and fro with every wind of doctrine.*

8. There is no erroneous doctrine so hazardous and damnable, but Satan will find out some active spirits to spread it, and to seduce others unto the imbracing of it: for, those are the men here spoken of, by whose sleight and cunning craftines the winds of false doctrine are made to blow, and carry children to and fro; *tossed by the sleights of men.*

9. As those whom Satan engageth to carry on a course of error and heresie

in a Church, are usually men of parts and gifts, exceeding far in abilities the generality of the Lords People, whom they intend to seduce, and as far as men of age and understanding go beyond simple children and babes; So these, whom Satan thus engageth, do usually prove men void of conscience, and stand not much upon fraud or falshood, providing they may gain their point: for, the Apostle calleth them *men* in opposition to those whom formerly he called *children*, and sheweth them to be such men as did make use of sleight and cogg-
ing craftinesse, and a subtile compendious art of deceiving, for carrying on their point; *by the sleight of men, and cunning craftinesse, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* 10. Though heretical spirits and seducers of others, are men void of conscience; Yet they make it their great work to hide their knavery, and to appear that which they are not, by their large pretences to conscience and piety, 2 Cor. 11. 15. hereby to deceive the simple, and to carry on their wofull design the more securely under that cover, Rom. 16. 18. for, he compareth them to cunning gamsters, who carry the matter so dexterously, that their fraud and knavery do not appear; *by the sleight of men*: He alludeth to subtile coggers of dice, as said is. 11. Hereticall spirits, and ringleaders of errour, are usually more than ordinarily assisted in their wofull work, and so as they fall upon dexterous means which they pursue uncessantly, and are attended with marvelous successe oftentimes in so doing; the Lord permitting Satan so to act them, and to act by them for heightening the triall, and making a more speedy and through discovery of the unstability of peoples spirits by those means; for, the expressions here used, do imply their more than ordinary assistance in all those; *by the sleight of men, their cunning craftinesse*, or singular dexterity to do any mischief, and *their lying in wait to deceive*, or, their deceiving, by a compendious subtil art. 12. However subtil seducers make a fair shew of Reason, Scripture, Piety, and Humility for procuring credit to their errors,
Col.

Col. 2. 23. yet the strong and only prop whereupon error leaneth, and wherein its great strength doth lie, is nothing else but vanity, falshood, subtil craftinesse and deceit: for, *Paul* sheweth that these are the arms of Hereticks whereby they defend their errors, even *winds of doctrines, sleight of men, cunning craftinesse, and lying in wait to deceive.* 13. That great measure of parts and gifts with which hereticall seducers are frequently indued, their unwearied diligence in making use of these their deceits, falshood and sleights for gaining their purposes, and the more than ordinary successe which they are attended with in trying times, ought not to discourage the weakest of the Lords people, or make them despair of standing out against their assaults, but rather incite them to watchfulnesse, to seek after knowledge, a spirit of discerning, solidity in judgement, and stability in truth; that so in the strength of the Lord they may resist their activity and wiles: for, the latter part of the verse hath an indirect argument in it for pressing the duty contained in the former, even that *henceforth we be no more children, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, and that because they had to do with the sleight of men, the cunning craftinesse of those who lie in wait to deceive.*

Verf. 15. *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*

HE doth illustrate the fore-mentioned end of the Ministry, thirdly, from another fruit of that spirituall edification, unto which the work of the Ministry is also subservient, even to growth in grace, or, that real Believers by speaking the truth (or rather, as the word signifieth, by *cleaving to the truth* of heavenly doctrine) and by making conscience of the duties of love and good works, as the fruit of their sincerity in adhering to truth, may grow up, and make progresse in all christian vertues, untill they attain to their full stature and height of growth, even such a measure of conformity with Christ,

Christ, as they be in a manner transformed in Him, and become most perfectly one with Him, whom he calleth here, as often elsewhere, (See upon chap. 1. 22.) *the head*, to show a reason, why Believers should grow up in Him, and to through conformity with Him; even, that so the Members of this mystical body, may be in some measure proportionable to their head. *Doct. 1.* The ordinance of the Ministry, is appointed of God, not only to awake those who are yet in nature, and drive them to Christ, *Eph. 5. 14.* but also for the good of those who are already converted, even to make them grow up in grace untill they come to perfection; and therefore none, who live on earth, can justly account themselves to be above this Ordinance: for, the Apostle sheweth that also is one end of the work of the Ministry, that those who are already quickened by it, *may grow up into him.* 2. The work of edification intended to be brought about by the ordinance of the Ministry, is not attained upon souls, though they be preserved free from Error, except they also know the Truth, adhere to it, and be growing up in grace, and in making conscience of all the duties of an holy life: for, *Paul*, having mentioned one fruit of that spirituall edification, mentioned ver. 12. to be freedom from error and infection from false teachers, ver. 14. he here addeth another, that *speaking, or cleaving to truth in love, we may grow up into him in all things.* 3. Our making conscience to grow in grace, is a soveraign remedy against the hazard of being surprized with error, and tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, in so far, as then we are so much busied about our heart, that we have not leisure to be taken up with vain and giddy notions of an unsetled head: for, *Paul*, having dehorted them from being as children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, subjoyneth, as a preservative from that unsetled temper, *but speaking the truth in love, we may grow up.* 4. It is not sufficient for these who live under the drop of Ordinances, to attain to the being of grace, so as they can

prove by evident marks that they have grace ; but they must also labour to grow in grace : for, hereby we glorifie God, and speak to the commendation of our Lords table, whereat we feed, *Joh. 15. 8.* hereby we attain to the enjoyment of many rich priviledges, which otherwise we are deprived of, *1 Joh. 4. 18.* and hereby also we are more enabled to ride out against a storm in trying times, as appeareth from the connexion of these two verses, teaching, that babes in Christ and children are tossed to and fro with every wind, when grown and growing Christians will ride it out : for, *Paul*, teaching that the end of the Ministry is to make Believers grow, doth show they ought to grow, while he saith, *But speaking the truth in love, we may grow.* 5. As we do then sincerely adhere to the truth of heavenly Doctrine, when we make evident our so doing by walking in all the duties of love, both to God and our neighbour ; (for faith worketh by love, *Gal. 5. 6.*) So our love is then truly Christian, and not a fleshly lust, or morall vertue only, when it is grounded upon truth, and the result of our adhering to it by faith : for, therefore *Paul* conjoyneth these two, making the latter, as it were, the result of the former, while he saith, *but speaking, or cleaving to the truth in love.* 6. That Christians may grow in grace, it is most necessary they labour to have both their understanding enlightened with truth, and their heart and affections inflamed with love, without either of which, our growth is not Christian and spirituall, but either superstitious and blind, even a growth in error, if the understanding be not enlightened ; or, growth in pride, conceit, self-love and arrogance, if, the head only being filled with light, our affections be not inflamed with love to God and our neighbour : for, therefore he prescribeth, that *by speaking the truth in love, we should grow up.* 7. This Christian growth must not only be in one thing, but in all things ; in so far, as grace must be growing, not only in all the parts of the soul, understanding, will and affections ; but the whole
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man also, and all the parts thereof must grow according to all the ordinary dimensions, or in all Christian virtues and duties, both of our generall and particular calling, *2 Pet. 1. 5.* even as it is in living bodies, who grow equally and proportionally in all their parts of length, breadth, height and depth; *That we may grow up in all things*, saith he. 8. Then do Christians grow as they ought, when they are in a perpetuall motion towards Christ, so as to be daily more and more like Him, incorporate in Him and one with Him; that full conformity with Christ, and that most perfect union and communion with Him, which shall be attained in glory, being the mark and scope toward which they tend, and without attaining whereof they do not sit down satisfied, as if they had enough: for, saith he, *We may grow up into Him.* 9. Though there ought to be a spiritual emulation among Christians, so as to strive who may grow most and outstrippe others, *1 Cor. 14. 12.* Yet there should be no division, envious strife, or carnal emulation among them upon this account, so as to envie the progresse of others, or cast stumbling-blocks in their way to retard them, but an harmonious on-going and rejoycing in the progresse one of another; seeing they are to grow, as the parts of one body under one head, Christ: for, so much doth Paul here teach, *We may grow up into Him, which is the head, even Christ.*

Verf. 16. From whom the whole body fitly joyned together, and compacted by that which every joynr supplieth, according to the effectuall working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of it self in love.

THE Apostle doth illustrate the forementioned end of the Ministry, fourthly, and joyntly inforceth the study of love and unity, by shewing how all gifts and offices do tend to the edifying of the body, and furtherance of that growth, whereof he spake, *verf. 15.* while

he describeth Christ the Head, presently spoken of, from His influence upon, and relation to the Church, His body; wherein he alludeth to a natural living body and the way how it, being orderly made up of its severall members, joyned together by nerves and sinews, doth receive life, motion, nourishment and growth from the head and heart, by the benefit of those bonds and ligaments, whereby the particular members do not only receive life and nourishment unto themselves, but do also convey them unto others, so that every member doth receive due encrease, and thereby the whole body doth come to maturity and growth. In allusion to which way of the naturall growth of the naturall body, he sheweth, first, that by vertue of spirituall influence drawn from Christ, who is as the head and heart of the mysticall body, the whole body, to wit, that which is militant on earth, or all sincere Believers, the true and lively members of this body, are *joyned fitly*, or orderly, every one in his own place and station, and also firmly or *compactly* with Christ, and among themselves. Secondly, that they are thus joyned, by the means of spirituall joynts and sinews, whereby we are to understand every thing that joyneth Believers with Christ, and among themselves; and they are either joynts and bonds of inward union and communion, to wit, the Spirit on Christs part, and faith and love on ours; or of externall union, to wit, the Word, Sacraments, and those functions and offices, which Christ hath appointed in His house: yea, and also all naturall and civil relations, when they are sanctified; and they are all called *joynts of subministration, or supply*, (for the words read better so than as they are rendered, *by that which every joynt supplyeth*) to shew, that those do serve, not only to conjoyn us with Christ, and among our selves, but also for channels and instruments of communication, by which, spiritual nourishment and matter of growth is conveyed both unto our selves and others. He sheweth, thirdly, that the whole members, and every one of them, being

being thus conjoynd, do not only themselves, by vertue of that furniture and spirituall nourishment, communicate from Christ, by the means of those joynts or bonds, make encrease and grow, but also make the whole body thus conjoynd to grow, and this *according to the effectuall working* of the holy Ghost, whereby those joynts, or means of conveying spiritual nourishment are blessed and made effectuall to the effect mentioned: which effectuall working and blessing of encrease and nourishment following upon it, is not communicated unto the members or parts without measure, as it was to Christ the Head, *Joh. 3. 34.* or unto all alike, but *in the measure of every part* or member, that is, such a measure as Christ judgeth sufficient and most convenient to every member, according to the place and function which they hold in the body, and the use which he is to make of them for the good of the body. And, lastly, he sheweth the end of the growth, and encrease of the whole body in all its members, to be not so much the good and advantage of the particular members, as the advancement and edification of the body it self, and of the particular members only, in so far as their edification and growth is carried alongs in, and contributeth for the edification of the body; and that this floweth from the force and power of the grace of *love* in all the members, which doth not look to it self only, *1 Cor. 13. -5-* but maketh every part contribute all what it is and can do for the benefit of others, and common good of the whole. Hence *Learn, 1.* As Christ and Believers make up one mysticall body, whereof He is head, and they members; (See upon chap. 1. 22, 23.) So all things requisit unto Believers to make them a body, do flow from Christ: their union, order, bonds of union, spirituall nourishment, and instruments of communication, whereby it is conveyed, their growth, and measure of their growth, and all is from Him, as the Apostle doth here fully teach: *from whom the whole body, &c.* 2. As there is a most orderly and firm union of all the members of this

body with their head, and among themselves; so this union is necessary in order to their receiving spirituall nourishment and making encrease thereby, even as it is in the natural body, a member cut off, or separated from the rest, cannot be nourished: for, he saith, *the whole body fitly joyned, and compacted, doth make encrease*: The first word, *fitly joyned*, doth expresse the orderly frame and proportion of all the members in this union; The second, *compacted*, expresth the firmnesse of this union.

3. As there are joynts and bonds both of the internall and externall union of this body, to wit, such as are held forth in the exposition, even the Spirit of God, with His speciall graces and common gifts; so that God doth make use of all those, both as bonds of union, and instruments of communication, whereby He conveyeth spirituall nourishment unto the respective members, is a strong argument to scare us from dividing, or renting upon these, or because of the diversity of those in the severall members: for, he saith, *the whole body is compacted by every joynt*; and he calleth them *joynts of supply*, whereby furniture is conveyed: his general scope wherein, is, to inforce the study of unity, notwithstanding of diversity of graces, gifts and offices, *compactd by that which every joynt supplyeth*, or, *every joynt of supply*.

4. There is no true member of this body either dead or idle, or living, and working only to it self; but what life or nourishment it hath received from the head, that it doth endeavour to communicate unto others: for, he saith, there is *an effectuall working from the Lord in every member, according to which it maketh increase*, not only of it self, but of the body.

5. As there is no member of this body, which receiveth the essentiall operation and gifts or graces of the holy Spirit without measure; and as all receive some measure, lesse or more: So it is the duty of all and every one to contribute for the good of others, and especially for the advantage of the whole body, not by extending themselves beyond their measure, but according to it; that being all which God requirerh

requireth: for, he saith, the *whole body*, or all the several members of the body, *do make increase of the body*, according to the effectuall working, in the measure of every part. 6. As it is not our improving of our measure of gifts and graces received, which, of it self, and without the effectuall operation and blessing of Gods Spirit, will bring about the spirituall good and advantage, either of our selves, or others; so we ought not on this pretence to ly-by doing nothing, but are to make use of our measure received, and depend upon the effectuall operation of Gods Spirit for a blessing to our so doing: for he saith, increase is made of the body according to both those, the Spirits effectuall operation, and the activity of every part or member, according to its measure, even, according to the effectuall working, in the measure of every part. 7. As all the lively members of this body do make increase, and grow in gifts and graces; so that is only true growth, and a growth, whereof Christ the head is fountain and author, which addeth somewhat to the whole body, and bringeth advantage to the Church in common, but not that growth, which seemeth to bring some benefit to a few, with the disadvantage of the rest: for, *the whole body*, or every member of the body, *maketh increase*, not only of it self, but also of the body, saith he. 8. As there is no such degree of growth attained here, neither by the Church in generall, nor its lively members in particular, but there are degrees yet wanting of their full and just stature; So the measure of growth, and increase already received, should be improved by us for attaining a further degree of growth and advantage, not only to our selves, but also to others, chiefly to the edification of the whole body: for, he saith, *every member maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of it self*: so that the increase received, is to be improven for attaining more, even further edification. 9. The more a man do find himself inclined and constrained to improve in his station, and according to his measure, all his receipts, whether of saving graces, or

common gifts, to the spirituall advantage of others, and chiefly for the common good of the whole body, he may the more certainly conclude, that he hath the grace of sincere love and charity rooted in his heart, and is acted by it: for, he maketh *love* the impulsive cause, why the severall members do improve all their receipts for promoting the edification of the whole Church, while he saith, *it maketh increase to the edifying of it self in love.*

Verf. 17. *This I say therefore, and testifie in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind.*

THE Apostle (being in the second part of the Chapter to dehort them from all impiety and profanity in the general, contrary to that walking worthy of their vocation, pressed, ver. 1.) giveth an example of that wickednesse, from which he dehortheth them, in the conversation of those other Gentiles, who were yet unconverted. and living in paganisme. And, first, while he doth most seriously and under a grave obtestation *by the Lord Jesus Christ*, as they would answer to Him, and evidence their esteem of Him, dehorth them from walking as those other Gentiles, he giveth a short sum of that godlesse conversation of theirs, calling it a *walking in the vanity of the mind*, that is, a following and practising of whatsoever their unrenewed understanding and mind did teach and prescribe: to which he ascribeth vanity, and calleth the mind of unrenewed men *vain*, because it is empty of the knowledge of God in Christ, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* and what knowledge it hath of God, or of right and wrong, is nothing but evanishing notions, *Rom. 1. 21.* and wholly unprofitable, as to the attaining of life and salvation, *Rom. 1. -20.* for, a *vain thing*, according to the common and scripture-use of the word, is an empty thing, *Isa. 41. 29.* an evanishing thing, *Prov. 31. -30-* and a thing unprofitable to attain the end intended, *Psal. 33. 17.*

Doct,

Doct. 1. To live in a course of profanity, and to be a member of Christs mystical body, drawing life, nourishment and growth from Christ the head, are wholly inconsistent: if the one be, the other cannot be; seeing profanity of life is not only directly opposit to that new life of grace, which all the members of that body do live, but also doth wholly obstruct the passages betwixt the head and the members, whereby spiritual influence for life and growth should be conveyed, *1 Job. i. 6.* for, the Apostle, from what he spake of influence for life and growth conveyed from Christ, the head, to all the members, doth infer here, that *therefore*, and as they would evidence themselves lively members of that body, so they would abandon profanity, while he saith, *This I say therefore, that ye walk not as other Gentiles.* 2. Ministers ought to be serious in pressing the duties of sanctification upon the Lords people, not only simply exhorting, but sometimes most gravely obtesting them by that which is dearest to them: whereby the Lords people may know, that their obedience to what is pressed, is no trifling matter, but such, as their eternal wellbeing is most highly concerned in: for, therefore doth Paul not only say and exhort them, but also *testifie* and obtest them in the Lord, that they walk not henceforth as other Gentiles.

3. Our long continuance in sin already, is so far from being an argument in reason to make us hold on in that course for the time coming, that, upon the contrary, this very same consideration should be a strong argument to shame us from it: for, so much is implied in his saying that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles: as if he had said, Ye have done so hithertils, therefore do no more so. See *1 Pet. 4. 3.* *Doct.* 4. Our turning to God in earnest to expect life and salvation from Him through Jesus Christ, doth call for, and will be attended with, an other sort of conversation than what we formerly had before conversion, or that naturall men, dead in sins and trespasses, for the present have: for, Paul exhorteth these converted *Ephesians* not to walk as they themselves sometimes

times did, nor as the unconverted Gentiles at present did; *I testifie*, saith he, *that ye hence-forth walk not as other Gentiles walk*. 5. Sense of mercy received from God, is a strong incitement unto dutie toward God: for, he doth not obscurely hint at Gods mercy in separating them from the common lot of other Gentiles, that so they may be the more incited to eschew what might dishonour Him; *that ye hence-forth walk not as other Gentiles*. 6. The vilenesse of sin is such, that it cannot be sufficiently expressed, and so expressed as to make us abhor it, by doctrine or word-speaking: therefore it is sometimes profitable to take a look of it in its vilenesse, power and tyrannie, as it manifesteth it self in the lives of unrenewed men, who are captive slaves unto it; providing we so look to it, as to make us abhor it, and carry at a greater distance from it: for, therefore doth *Paul* hold forth a map of that wickednesse, which he dehortheth them from, in the example of those unconverted Gentiles, that by seeing of it they might the more abhor it; *That ye hence-forth walk not as other Gentiles walk*. 7. The conversation of all men unrenewed; is vain and fruitlesse, as spending their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not, *Isa. 55. 2*: for, he speaketh of all the unconverted Gentiles, *that they walk in vanity*. 8. Whatever vanity or wickednesse is in the outward conversation of a naturall man, it doth wholly flow from the vanity of the mind and understanding within; and as the mind is, so will the conversation be: and therefore even the mind it self, the chief seat of reason, is corrupted and vain, and so vain, that from thence doth flow corruption and vanity to the whole man: for, he ascribeth the vanity of their walking to the vanity of their mind; *As other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind*, saith he.

Verf. 18. *Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.*

NExt, that the Apostle may the more effectually deter them from walking as these other Gentiles did, he doth more largely and distinctly set forth that vain and godlesse conversation of theirs, by shewing severall branches and degrees thereof, both inward in their understanding and affections, and outward in their life and conversation: And, first, he sheweth, that *their understanding* and knowing part, or that part of it, whereby men do reason, inferring one thing from another, (for so the word signifieth) was wholly blind and *darkened*, to wit, as to those things which relate to God and heaven, *1 Cor. 1. 21.* whatever was their understanding and quicknesse of judgement in other things, *Gen. 4. 21, 22.* yet, in those things they were altogether vain and *wilde*, *Rom. 1. 21.* And, secondly, that they were *estranged* from, and wholly destitute of, *the life of God*, or that spirituall life, begun in regeneration, *Job. 3. 3.* and consisting in the saving knowledge of God, and the severall pieces of Gods image, *Col. 3. 10.* called *the life of God*, because not only God is the author of it, as He is of our naturall life; but also it floweth, both in its being and operation, from the gracious presence of God dwelling in us by His Spirit, *Gal. 2. 20.* And, thirdly, he sheweth that the cause of those former two, was their *ignorance* of God, and of those things belonging to the worship of God and their own salvation, to wit, both simple ignorance, or want of the knowledge of those things; which ignorance is in all by nature, and ignorance affected and delighted in; whereby the things of God are judged foolishnesse, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* from which ignorance of theirs did flow a further degree of darknesse in the understanding, and of alienation from the life of God, than what was naturall unto them.

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And, fourthly, that this their ignorance, with both the forementioned effects, did flow from *their blindness*, or rather, as the Originall doth read, *hardnesse of heart*, whereby their heart, or that part of the soul, which chooseth and refuseth good or evil, did obstinately and against all means used to the contrary, refuse the light of God, which was proffered unto them, and were wholly inflexible to good, being obdured and hardened, not only naturally from their birth, *Psal. 51. 5.* but also voluntarily by themselves, *Exod. 8. 15.* and judicially by God, *Exod. 9. 12.* *Dock. 1.* That the vileness of sin may be sufficiently seen, and so as we may abhor and detest it, it is not sufficient to take a general view of it, and in the bulk, except we also dive into the particular branches, pieces and degrees of it, and by ripping up the womb of that abominable monster, look upon the vile intrals of it, that so we may be made to detest and hate it with a perfect hatred: for, therefore *Paul*, being to deterre these Ephesians from walking as the Gentiles, doth not only give a brief sum of their wickednesse in the bulk, ver. 17. but also here, and ver. 19. doth more distinctly lay open the severall branches and degrees of it; *Having the understanding darkned, &c.* 2. Man considered in his natural state, is so vile and loathsome by reason of sin, that being rightly anatomized and deciphered, there is nothing to be seen in him but what may make himself and others to abhor him; there being no part of him, neither in soul nor body, free from those wounds, bruises and putrifying sores which sin hath brought upon him, as appeareth by this discovery, which in these two verses the Spirit of God by *Paul* maketh of him: *his understanding is darkned, his heart hardened, his conscience past feeling, &c.* for, he speaketh this of all the Gentiles, who were not yet converted, and consequently of all men in their unrenewed state: and though all such have not arrived at the utmost height of that wickednesse, which some of those expressions hold forth; yet that vain mind, spoken of, ver. 17, which is the root of all the rest, is in

in every unrenewed man, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* and every such man is posting towards all that wickednesse here expressed : yea, and would arrive at the utmost height of all, if restraining grace did not hinder him, *Gen. 20. 6.* and therefore in Gods sight he may be justly charged with all ; *having the understanding darkned, &c. 3.* As every man by nature is wholly unskillfull to discern the things of God, or to improve those lurking principles of the knowledge of a Godhead, and of right and wrong remaining after the fall (*Rom. 1. 20.*) by drawing solid conclusions from them, for rules to direct him in the matter of worship, and walking in the way to salvation ; So this unskillfulnesse and darknesse of his, doth daily increase, and the longer he liveth, and exerciseth himself in finding out what is right and acceptable to God in those things, by the direction and guidance of his natural light only, he is the further from the mark : for, he speaketh of a further darkening of their understanding, than what was naturall to them, even that, which did flow from ignorance and hardnesse of heart, as is clear from the construction of the words ; *Having their understanding darkened — through the ignorance that is in them.* 4. As all men did once in their common root and first father *Adam* partake of the life of God, consisting in Gods image, *Eccles. 7. 29.* and are now, by *Adams* fall, from their very conception and birth, deprived of it, *Rom. 5. 12, 13, 14.* So, the longer they live in their unrenewed state, they are the more estranged from it, while every sin they commit doth make them in a further degree incapable of it : for, he speaketh of a further degree of alienation from the life of God, than what was naturall to them, even that which was afterward contracted by their ignorance and hardnesse of heart ; *Being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them.* 5. Hardnesse of heart is a wooll evil, and the root and fountain of severall other evils, in so far as when a man doth obstinately refuse light, and walketh contrary to light, and so hardeneth his

his heart to do mischief, he thereby provoketh the Lord to give him over to ignorance, and to lose the small measure of knowledge which he formerly had, *Rom. 1. 28.* And thus, hardnesse is the cause of ignorance, and being thus both hardned in heart, and blinded in mind, he is further removed and estranged from the life of God, which consisteth in the saving knowledge of God in Christ, *Job. 17. 3.* and his understanding and reason rendered more dark and unskilfull to find out what is truth or errour, right or wrong; the common principles which were left in him after the fall concerning those things, being now through a continued custome of obstinacie in sin almost wholly obliterated and blotted out: for, if we look exactly to the construction of the words, we will find that the *blindnesse or hardnesse of their hearts* is mentioned as the cause of that *ignorance which was in them*, and both hardnesse and ignorance, as the cause of their *alienation from the life of God*, and the *darkning of their understandings*.

Verf. 19. Who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

HE doth here set forth some other, and those higher branches and degrees of their impiety, profanity and godlesse conversation, which did follow upon, and flow from the former. *As, 1.* they had lost all remorse of conscience, fear of Gods judgement, and so did sin without inward check or challenge. And, secondly, which followed upon the former, they gave themselves with the full consent of their will and benfall of their affections to think upon, and delight in the fulfilling of their lascivious, petulant and filthy lusts. And, thirdly, which was the result of all the rest, they acted all sort of uncleannesse with a sort of greedinesse, and, as it were, striving who should do most mischief for a prize and reward. *Doct. 1.* Though originall sin hath seized upon the whole soul, understanding, will and

and affections; yet the Lord hath kepted so much of the knowledge of Himself, and of right and wrong in the understanding of naturall men, as they may know in many things, when they sin and do evil; and so much of conscience, as to accuse or excuse according to the nature of the fact, *Rom. 2. 15.* whereupon followeth either grief, or joy in their affections: for, while he saith, they were *past all feeling*, and lost all remorse, he implieth they once had it, before they came to that height.

2. Wicked men may arrive to such an height of sin, as to have no sense of sin, no grief, nor check, nor challenge from conscience for it: for, this is to *pass feeling*, which Paul affirmeth of those Gentiles; *who having past feeling.*

3. As one degree of sin maketh way for another; so in particular, hardnesse of heart, and obstinacie in sin, do eat out the edge of conscience, making it wholly senselesse and stupid, so that it giveth neither check nor challenge for sin: for, upon their hardnesse of heart did follow that which is here affirmed; *Who being past feeling.*

4. A watching conscience, doing its duty, is the strongest restraint from sin: and where that is not, all other restraints will serve for little purpose: for, upon their *having past feeling*, he saith, *they gave themselves over to lasciviousnesse.*

5. When men do give themselves without check and restraint to think upon their sin with delight, they cannot choose but fall out in the outward act of that sin, though it were never so grosse: for, upon their giving themselves over to lasciviousnesse, they gave themselves also to *work all uncleannesse.*

6. For a man to be given over to lasciviousnesse, and to fulfill his beastly lusts without all check or challenge, it argueth a great height of impiety, and such as speaketh a man ignorant of God, judicially hardned in heart, and altogether past feeling: for, he maketh this the result of all the fore-mentioned branches of their wickednesse, even that *they gave themselves over unto lasciviousnesse, to work all wickednesse.*

7. As upon senselesse stupidity of conscience, through frequent resisting of light, there
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followeth an unsatiablenesse in sinning, especially in the sin of uncleannesse, that the more a man doth sin, he is the more eager upon sin, and can never have enough of it; So, when a man cometh to this, he is then arrived at the greatest height of sin, unto which ever the Heathens, destitute of the knowledge of God, did attain: for, this is the highest step of all, that through hardnesse of heart, being past feeling, they did not only simply act uncleannesse, but *gave themselves to work all uncleannesse with greedinesse.*

Verf. 20. *But ye have not so learned Christ:*

HE preffeth the former exhortation, set down, ver. 17. from this, That the saving knowledge of Christ, wherein they were instructed, was inconsistent with such a licentious life as those other Gentiles lived in. *Doff. 1.* The anatomizing of that vile monster, sin, and setting it forth in its blackest colours, is not alone sufficient to scare the Lords people from it: but such is the interest which sin hath in the best, and such is their pronenesse to it, that besides, there must be other strong arguments made use of to keep them from falling in it: for, the Apostle, having set forth the vilenesse of sin at length, seeth it necessary here to superadd another argument to inforce the former dehortation; *But ye have not so learned Christ*, saith he. 2. As the giving of loose reigns to sin, is inconsistent with the state of grace and the saving knowledge of Christ; So, there is no argument more prevalent with a gracious heart to keep them up from profaniry and loosnesse, than the through inculcating of this truth: for, among many other arguments *Paul* maketh choice of this, *But ye have not so learned Christ.* 3. As true Believers must be schollars, daily learning somewhat; So the sum of all they have to learn and know, is *Christ*, He being the end of the Law, *Rom. 10. 4.* and the great Subject of the Gospel, *Col. 1. 27.* in whom all the promises are Yea and Amen, *2 Cor. 1. 20.* for, saith he,

he, ye have not so learned Christ. 4. There is no remedy or cure of our naturall corruption, and of all those other filthy wounds and sores, that follow upon it, but in Christ Jesus, being truly known, imbraced and made use of, as He is set forth in the Doctrine of the Gospel. No moral precepts, though enforced by most strong and moving considerations, can reach the root of this wofull disease: for, he opposeth their learning Christ, as the alone antidote against that vanity of mind, with all its branches and degrees formerly spoken of; *But ye have not so learned Christ.* 5. Accordingly as we are instructed and learned by Christ; so we ought to walk, and put that knowledge, which we have of Him and from Him, in practice: for, his scope is to prove they should not walk so, because *they had not learned Christ so.*

Verf. 21. *If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.*

HE doth here limit the former reason, by showing the knowledge which they had of Christ, was inconsistent with such a licentious life, only upon this supposal, if so by learning Christ preached, they had been inwardly taught and instructed by Christ Himself in the truth, and *as the truth was in him*, who did not only know the truth, but also practised what He knew, so that His life was a true copie of that holinesse, which is taught in the Gospel, *Matth. 11. 29. Doct. 1.* It is not every sort of learning Christ, or of knowledge, that may be had of Christ, which excludeth profanity, and is inconsistent with a licentious life. Many do in a sort learn Him and know Him, who abuse that knowledge they have of Him, for making them sin the more securely, *Rom. 6. 1.* even those, who turn the grace of God to wantonnesse, *Jude ver. 4.* for, he sheweth what he spake of that inconsistency, which is between learning Christ and the practice of profanity, doth not alwayes

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hold, while he addeth this limitation, *if so be ye have heard him.* 2. Whatever grounds a Minister hath for charity to judge of all, or any of the Lords people committed to his charge, as truly gracious; yet he ought to expresse that his judgement of them, with so much warinesse and caution, as ground may be given unto them to enquire in their own condition and search, whether it be so: for, *Paul*, having (ver. 20.) professed his charitable judgement of them, that they had not so learned Christ, he giveth a limitation here, whereby they might try if it was so; *if so be ye have heard him.* 3. That learning of Christ, and knowledge of Him, which is the only remedy against the power of inherent corruption, is begotten in us by the ordinary mean of hearing Him preached, and set forth in the publick Ministry of the Gospel, *Rom.* 10. 14, 15. for, this is one piece of that condition, which is required to the learning of Christ thus, *even if so ye have heard him.* 4. The hearing of Christ preached by sent Ministers, is not alone sufficient, in order to this effectuall learning of Him, but Christ Himself must teach us inwardly and effectually by His Spirit, else we cannot so learn Him: for, this is another piece, and the main piece of that condition required antecedently to their learning of Christ thus, *if so ye have been taught by him.* 5. Then do we rightly and savingly learn truth, when the knowledge of truth attained by our learning, is such, as Christs knowledge was, to wit, not theoretick and speculative only, but practicall and operative: for, so was His knowledge of truth, *Psal.* 40. 8. and they were to be taught by Him, *as the truth is in Jesus*, else they had not so learned Christ.

Verf. 22. *That ye put off concerning the former conversation; the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitfull lusts:*

HE doth, next, shew, what it is to be taught by Christ, *as the truth is in him*; and thereby confirmeth what he said, ver. 20. that the saving knowledge of Christ is inconsistent with a licentious life, in so far as this effectually learning of Christ, and knowledge of Him, requireth from, and effectually worketh in, the person so instructed, three things. The first whereof is in this verse, to wit, a daily study to *put off* and mortifie the *old man*, whereby is not meant the substance of a mans soul and body, nor yet the naturall and essentiall faculties of the soul; (for, those of necessity do alwayes remain, untill the man cease to be) but that naturall and inbred corruption, which hath infected and polluted all those: which inbred corruption he sheweth had manifested itself in their former godlesse conversation, and doth grow daily worse, and more *corrupt*, yea, and by little and little bringeth corruption and destruction upon the whole man, both in soul and body, where it is given way to in *its deceitfull lusts*: for, so much doth he intend, while he saith, *it is corrupt according, or, by deceitfull lusts*. Now, this inbred corruption, is here called *the old man*, and the mortifying of it, is called a *putting of it off*, by a metaphor taken from the laying aside and casting off of old garments. See the reasons for both, upon Col. 3. - 9. doct. 1. Hence, *Learn*, 1. So much may we reckon our selves to know of Christ, and to be taught by Christ, as we do practise according to what we know. Those only are best scholars in Christs school, who are most tender walkers: for, *Paul* sheweth, that to learn Christ, and to be taught by Him, is, in a word, to practise all the duties of an holy life, even *that ye put off the old man, &c.* saith he.

2. Then do we set about the duties of sanctification in

the right order, when we begin at the work of mortification in the first place, and thence proceed to the positive duties of a new life: the plants of righteoulnesse will not thrive in an unhumbled, proud, impenitent heart, *Job. 5. 44.* for, *Paul* sheweth the first part of this lesson, is, to *put off concerning the former conversation, the old man.* 3. Then do we carry on the work of mortification right and to good purpose, when we single not out some one sin passing by others, but do strike at all sin, and do not content our selves to lop the branches, but strike at the very root of sin: for, *Paul* describeth this work to be a putting off the old man, that is, the bitter root of inbred corruption, in its full latitude and extent; *That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man.* 4. Though we must begin to strike at the root of sin within; yet we are not to rest there, but must set against sin in all its branches; and whoever setteth upon sin at the root and in the heart, he cannot choose but set against the breaking forth of sin in his hand and outward conversation also: yea, the reality of his fighting against his inward corruptions, will make it self manifest in an outward change in his conversation from what it formerly was: for, so much is imported, while he sheweth they were to *put off the old man*, as to *the former conversation*, not as if sins of the outward man and conversation only, were to be put off; but because those are also to be mortified, and the inward work of mortification doth kyth by our putting off of those. 5. The work of putting off and mortifying this old man of inbred corruption, is to be entered timously, in so far, as the longer that corruption is spared, it groweth worse, and posseth the person, in whom it is, more swiftly to ruine and destruction: for, *Paul* doth, indirectly at least, presse this duty of putting off the old man, from this *that it is corrupt*, or groweth worse and worse by its *deceitfull lusts.* 6. This inbred root of naturall corruption, doth vent it self in multitudes and swarmes of inordinate lusts and sinfull desires, by venting whereof, it doth

doth alwayes acquire the more strength, and secureth its interest more firmly, both in soul and body: for, he sheweth, that this old man hath lusts, and is corrupted, or made worse, and more deeply rooted by those lusts; *which is corrupted by deceitfull lusts.* 7. Sinfull lusts are enticing and deceitfull lusts, in so far as they promise what they never perform, *2 Pet. 2. 19.* and do often cover themselves under the mask of some laudable vertue, *Col. 2. 18.* and thus do by subtilty carry the sinner captive to their slavery, *Prov. 7. 21, 22.* for, he calleth them *deceitfull lusts*, or, as it is in the Originall, *lusts of deceit.*

Verf. 23. *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind.*

HERE is the second thing which the effectual learning of Christ doth require from, and work in, the person so taught, even a serious endeavour to have his mind and understanding more and more *renewed*, or made new, by getting a new quality of divine and supernatural light implanted in it; and he calleth the understanding, or rational part of the soul, *the spirit of their mind*, that is, the most spiritual part of the soul; or, by an Hebraism, their spiritual mind, so called, because the mind, or understanding, is lesse subject to be wrought upon by the temper and disposition of the body, than the will and affections. *Dott. 1.* The principal part of the soul, the very seat of reason, the mind and understanding in all men, is by nature infected and polluted by this old man of inbred corruption: for, otherwise there were no need that we should be *renewed in the spirit of our mind.* 2. It is not sufficient in order to our effectual learning of Christ, and being taught by Him, that we cease to do evill, and labour to mortifie our inbred corruption, with the severall branches thereof; but we must also learn to do well, and endeavour to have the whole man adorned with the severall graces of Gods Spirit, making conscience of all the positive duties of an holy life:

life: for, the Apostle sheweth their being taught of Christ, consisted, not only in the putting off the old man, but in being renewed in the spirit of their mind, and ver. 24. in putting on that new man. 3. See three doctrines implied in the notation of the word *renewed*, which signifieth to restore a thing deformed and antiquated, to its ancient form and beauty, upon Col. 3. ver. 10. doct. 4. 5. 6. Doct. 4. Right information of the mind and judgement, and the knowledge of truth and duty flowing therefrom, are most necessary to be sought after by Christians, if so they would lead an holy life: An erring mind will of necessity, at least in so far, make a crooked heart and an irregular hand: for, Paul sheweth that in particular it is necessary to be renewed in the spirit of the mind.

Ver. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

Resteth the third thing, which the effectual learning of Christ doth require from, and work in, those who are so taught, even that it be their daily task to put on the new man, that is, to be more and more endued and adorned with new and spirituall qualities, whereby their mind may not only be renewed, as was mentioned ver. 23. but also their will, affections and actions. Which renewing work he sheweth is carried-on by Gods creating power, after the pattern of His own Image, which consisteth in perfect conformity to Gods Law, as well in the second Table, set forth here by righteousness, as in the first, set forth by true holiness, or holiness of truth, to wit, that which is wrought by truth, Job. 17. 17. and is not counterfeit, but sincere, true and reall: which epithet doth also agree to righteousness. Now, those gracious and spiritual qualities, are called the new man, and said to be put on, as new garments. See the reasons for both, upon Col. 3. ver. 9, 10. doct. 3. Hence Learn, 1. Where there is saving knowledge wrought

wrought in the mind, sanctified practice in all the duties of an holy life will follow: for, unto the renewing of the mind, ver. 23. is here subjoynd the *putting on the new man in righteousness and holiness*. 2. So dead and indisposed are we by nature to holiness and grace, that no lesse than creating power is required to work it in us: It is neither implanted by nature, *Psal. 51. 5.* nor attainable by any industry or pains of ours, *Rom. 9. 16.* but is a work of Gods omnipotency, though He make use of means for that end, *2 Tim. 4. 2.* for, he saith, *this new man is created*. 3. Only those who are renewed in knowledge and have their souls adorned with gracious and spirituall qualities of righteousness and holiness, are like to God; and such, as are most so, are most like unto Him: for, *Paul*, speaking of being renewed in the mind, and of putting on the new man, saith, that it is *after God*, or, (as it is more plainly, *Col. 3. 10.*) *after the Image of God; Which after God is created*, saith he. 4. The Image of God consisteth, not so much in the natural substance, or faculties of the soul, or the abilities of it, (for those are in a wicked man) as in spiritual gifts and graces, even conformity with God in true knowledge, righteousness and holiness: for, the Apostle, speaking of the renovation of the mind by knowledge, and putting on the new man in righteousness and holiness, saith, That this is *after God*, or, *after His Image*. 5. This new man of grace, created after Gods Image, as it consisteth not in things external, *Rom. 14. 17.* but in the inward and substantial graces of Gods Spirit; so it comprehendeth all spiritual habits, and vertues, and the exercise of all those graces, in all the duties of universal obedience, prescribed in both the Tables of the moral Law: for, he sheweth this new man consisteth in righteousness and holiness, which include a conformity to the Law of God in both its Tables; *Which is created in righteousness and holiness*. 6. No performance of any one, or of all commanded duties whatsoever, is a sufficient proof of a renewed mind, or

the new creature, but when it carrieth alongs with it that necessary ingredient of sincerity and truth, which maketh the performer of any duty, take God for his party, *Gen. 17. 1.* bring up his heart to every duty, *Jer. 3. 10.* and level at Gods glory as his main scope in all duties, *1 Cor. 10. 31.* and make conscience, not only of one, but of every duty, *Luke 1. 6.* for, he giveth this epithet of truth and sincerity to that righteousness and holiness, wherein this new man of grace, created after Gods Image, doth consist; in *righteousnesse and true holinesse*, or in righteousness and holiness of truth.

Verf. 25. *Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.*

THE Apostle (being in the third part of the Chapter to presse upon them the exercise of some particular vertues, which do belong to all Christians of whatsoever rank or station equally, aswell as those formerly spoken of, all of which are injoynd in the second Table of the Commands) exhorteth them, first, from what he spake of putting off the old man, and putting on the new, to *lay aside* and mortifie the sin of *lying*, forbidden in the ninth Command, whereby a man doth speak what he knoweth or conceiveth to be untruth, with an intention and purpose to deceive. He exhorteth them also to speak the truth every man with his neighbour, that is, to speak as they think, and to think of what they speak as it really is, so that our speech may be conform both to the thing it self, and to our conceptions of the thing. Which exhortation in both its branches, is inforced from this, that they were not only members of one body, but *one of another*, every member of this mysticall body being bound to contribute all its endeavours, as for the good of the whole body in the first place, so of every particular member in the next; and therefore it had been alike unnaturall and monstrous for them, by
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lying and deceiving to circumveen one another, as it were for the eye in the naturall body to deceive the hand, or for any one member to contrive and carry on the ruine of another. *Doct. 1.* It is not sufficient for Christs Ministers to presse upon the Lords people the mortification of sin, or conscience-making of the duties of holinesse in the generall; but, seing people are apt to think that an sleight performance, or faint endeavours are sufficient obedience to these generall exhortations; therefore Ministers must condescend upon some particular vices, chiefly such as are most commonly practised in the place where they are, and some particular vertues, which are most ordinarily sleighted, pressing upon the Lords people to evidence their renovation by abstinence from the former, and practising of the latter: for, *Paul*, having indirectly at least exhorted them to put off the old man, ver. 22. and put on the new, ver. 24. doth now fall upon some particular vices and vertues, dehorting from the one, and exhorting to the other; *Wherefore putting away lying.* 2. There is no sin more unseemly in a Christian, and more inconsistent with grace, than the sin of lying, there being no sin that maketh a man more like the devil, *Job. 8. 44.* more abominable to God, *Prov. 6. 16, 17.* nor more shamefull in the eyes of men, so that even they, who are most guilty of it, cannot endure to be charged with it; no sin more hurtful to the sinner, as making him to be trusted by none, and no sin which tendeth more to the utter overthrow of all humane societie; fidelity and trust among men, being that which maketh any society comfortable: for, the Apostle dehortheth from lying, upon the ground of their putting on the new man, as is implied in the illative particle *Wherefore*: *Wherefore putting away lying.* 3. As all kind of lying is intrinsically sin, and to be avoided, whether the pernicious, officious, or sporting lie; (See upon *Col. 3. 8, 9.* doct. 10.) So there is no person of whatsoever rank, whether rich or poor, to whom God giveth any dispensation to lie, or speak contrary to truth:

truth : for, he saith indefinitely, *putting away lying*, and *speake every man truth*, without exception. 4. Though we are not bound to speak all the truth, and at all times, and to every person, but in some cases may and ought conceal somewhat of it, *Luk. 9. 21. 1 Sam. 16. 2.* yet, when we speak, we are to speak nothing but truth, and that without mentall reservation of any part of the purpose, without which the rest which is spoken, would not be truth but a lie : for, though it be sufficient for a man to think what is truth, and not expresse it, when he is speaking or meditating with himself ; yet he is to speak truth, if so he speak at all, when he speaketh with his neighbour ; *speake every man truth with his neighbour*, saith he. 5. This is a generall rule to be observed for the right understanding of divine precepts, that where a sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is also commanded, and where a duty is commanded, the contrary sin is also forbidden : for, the Apostle, expounding here the ninth command, doth not only exhort *to lay aside lying* ; but also *to speake every man the truth with his neighbour*. 6. Though it be sinfull to lie, and speak untruth unto any, even to an infidel, *Ezek. 17. 16.* yet, it is more sinfull, and most odious for Believers and Professors of the same faith, because of their nearer bonds and relations, to lie unto, and deceive one another : for, so much the Apostles reason here used, which is alstricted only to such, doth teach ; *for we are members one of another*, saith he. 7. It is not sufficient, that a man abstain from lying, and endeavour to speak truth with his neighbour, from a motive of self-advantage and interest, as knowing his doing otherwise would tend both to his losse and shame ; but he ought to be acted herein from a principle of love towards those with whom he speaketh, chiefly, if he conceive them to be Believers, as to members of that same body, for whose advantage and preservation especially, he is bound to lay out himself in his place and station ; so far must he be from seeking to underrmine them, or deceive them : for, *Paul will have them*

them to put away lying, and to speak the truth; for this reason, that they were all members one of another,

Verf. 26. Be ye angry and sin not, let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

HE exhorteth them, next, to restrain and moderate their anger, forbidden in the sixth command. And, 1. he, as it were, giveth them way to be angry sometimes, and in some cases. 2. He dissuadeth them from sinfull anger, or any unjust desire of revenge, which is, when anger is kindled rashly, *Prov. 14. 17.* for no cause, *Matth. 5. 22.* or a very light one, *1 Cor. 13. 5.* or when it exceedeth the just bounds, *Gen. 49. 7.* And, 3. if their anger at any time should exceed bounds, and turn to wrath, or bitterness of spirit, he exhorteth them to suppress it speedily, even before the Sun go down, not cherishing that ill, or forbearing themselves in it, for the space of one night. *Dott. 1.* Seing anger is a naturall affection, planted in our first parents at the first creation: yea, and also was found in Christ Himself, who was without sin, *Mark 3. 5.* therefore it is not in it self a sin, nor alwayes sinfull; but, as it is in its own nature indifferent, and becometh good or evil, according to the grounds, causes, objects and ends of it; So it is sometimes, and in some cases a necessary duty for a Christian to be angry, to wit, when anger floweth from zeal to Gods glory, *Job. 2. 15.* with 17. and love to our brother, *Prov. 13. 24.* and when it is conceived upon just and weighry causes, such chiefly, as Gods dishonour, whether by our own sins, *2 Cor. 7. 11.* or the sins of others, *Exod. 32. 19.* when it is incensed, not so much against the person of our brother, as against his sin, and therefore against that sin in our selves, as much as in others, *Matth. 7. 5.* when it doth not hinder other duties of love, which we owe to the person whom we are angry with, *Exod. 32. 19.* with 32. neither doth mar our access to God in prayer, *1 Tim. 2. 8.* and when we go not without the compasse of our calling, by giving

giving way to private revenge in the accomplishment of our anger, *Luke 9. 54. 55.* In those cases, anger is praiseworthy and commendable: for, the Apostle giveth way to anger, yea after a sort commandeth it, to wit, in those cases; *be ye angry*, saith he. 2. As there is an easie and ready passage from what is moderation in our naturall affections of joy, fear, grief, desire (and therefore lawfull and in some cases necessary) to what is excesse, (and therefore sinfull) *Psal. 2. 11.* So this doth chiefly hold in the affection of anger; it being most diffiicile to keep a measure, and not to exceed, by transgressing some one or other of the fore-mentioned limitations of just anger when it is once given way to; for, therefore doth he add this necessary caution, *Be angry, but sin not.* 3. As it is possible, even in the childe of God, for lawfull anger to degenerate in sinfull wrath, whereby the mind is imbittered, and accordingly rageeth against the person of him who hath done the wrong; So, an implacable spirit, which cannot be worn out by length of time, is not so incident to any such: for, the Apostle supponeth they may have wrath; only they might not entertain it long, while he saith, *Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.* 4. The childe of God in his resisting sin, is not to sit down discouraged, nor give the back when sin prevaileth; but, having received a new recruit of strength from Christ, by the exercise of faith in prayer, *2 Cor. 12. 8.* he is with renewed courage to set upon sin a-fresh, that so he may recover what was formerly lost: for, *Paul* enjoyneth, in case their anger should at any time exceed, to set against it without delay; *Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.*

Verf. 27. *Neither give place to the devil:*

HE giveth a reason of the former exhortation, set down by way of precept, to wit, that by giving way to excessive anger, and by persevering in it for any space of time, they should cast open doors to Sathan, the capita

pital enemie of mans salvation, to enter their hearts, and to incite them by his uncessant suggestions to act some mischief. *Dock. 1.* As Sathan is dethroned and shut to the doors of the hearts of all such as are true believers; So, though he shall never reign again over them at his pleasure, *Rom. 6. 14.* Yet, he is daily watching, and searching out, if it were but the narrowest passage, and least opportunity, whereby he may again re-enter his old possession, and exercise his former tyrannie: for, both those are implied, while he saith, *neither give place to the devil.* *2.* Where any known sin, especially excessive anger, is not only given way to, but also continued in, there doth Sathan get an open door to settle himself in the heart, and exercise his power, by inciting the person guilty to commit more of wickednesse and mischief: for, he sheweth, that by their persevering in wrath they would *give place to the devil.* *3.* As Sathan doth not slip an offered opportunity of recovering his former interest in the heart; So where he gaineth any ground, though for never so short a space, he stirreth his time, and through Gods permission maketh fearfull havock, and a doolfull decay of the work of grace: for, while he holdeth this forth as an argument against their persevering in excessive anger, that thereby they should cast open doors for the devil to enter, it is implied, that he would take place when it were given, and bestir his time in exciting them to act mischief, otherwise the argument should not be of such force; *neither give place to the devil.*

Verf. 28. Let him that stole, steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

HE doth, thirdly, exhort those, who, when they were un-converted Pagans, did contrary to the eighth command, steal their neighbours goods, or who were yet, after their professing faith in Jesus Christ, guilty of that

that sin in some degrees and respects, that they would *steal no more*: where by the sin of *stealing*, is meant all those fraudulent and deceitfull wayes whereby a man doth wrong his neighbour secretly and without his knowledge in his goods or outward estate, whether by taking (*Job* 20. 19.) or withholding from him what is his, *Jam.* 5. 4. or by partaking with such as do so, *Psal.* 50. 18. He exhorteth them also to the contrary duty, as a remedy of this evil, even that they would rather labour diligently, and to wearinesse (as the word signifieth) in any good and honest calling, if it were but in some mechanick or handy-trade: The use of which remedy is enforced from a following advantage, to wit, that hereby, and through Gods blessing upon their diligence, they should acquire not only a competencie in things worldly unto themselves, and so be kept from a necessity of stealing; but also might be able to bestow somewhat for supplying the necessities of others: *Doct.* 1. As Jesus Christ doth not reject the vilest, no not thieves, nor worse, for any thing they have been, providing they amend their life in time coming; So there are many, who, after they have taken on a name of profession, do secretly live in the practice of base and shameful sins, which hardly can be called the spots of children: for, while he saith, *Let him that stole, or doth steal, (as the word beareth) steal no more*, it is supposed, that some of those *Ephesians*, were guilty of this sin, before an offer of mercy was made to them in the Gospel; yea, and that some were yet living in it. 2. It hath seemed good unto the wise Creator of all things, (for eschewing of confusion, strife, contention and other infinit evils; for tryall of the charity of some, and patience of others) to establish property and dominion of goods and possessions, and not to leave all things common among men, so that every one should have an equall right unto all: for if there were no propriety of goods, there could not be such a sin as *stealing*, neither were it necessary to forbid it, as the Spirit of God doth here; *Let him that stole, steal*

steal no more. 3. As want of a particular calling, or idleness in it, occasioneth poverty and want, by reason whereof men are cast upon tentations, to steal and use such other sinfull shifts, to keep them from straits; So it is the Lords will, that every one betake himself to labour diligently in some lawfull calling and employment, as a remedy, not only against this evil of stealing, but severall others also, which flow from idleness, and too much ease, *2 Thess. 3. 12. Psal. 73. 5.* for, the Apostle, having forbidden them to steal, subjoyneth this as a remedy, *rather let him labour, working with his hands.* 4. Though it be not absolutely necessary, nor yet convenient, or possible, that every man should betake himself to some mechanick calling, or handy-trade, and therein to labour with his hands, seeing every one is not able to go about any such calling; and there are other lawfull callings, which require no lesse labour with the mind, than those do of labour with the hands; *1 Tim. 5. 17.* yet, there is no calling so base, providing it be honest, to which a man should not betake himself (what ever he be for birth, and nobility of descent) and spend his strength therein, even to weariness, rather than to steal, or use any sinfull shift to save himself from straits: for, saith he, *let him steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands.* 4. Even those things that were imposed upon fallen mankind, for a curse and punishment of sin, have their nature changed unto Believers, and are turned unto a blessing and an effectuall remedy against sin: for, (*Gen. 3. 19.*) it is imposed upon Adam as a part of the curse, in the sweat of his face to eat his bread; and here it is enjoyned, and commended by the Apostle unto Believers, as an effectuall remedy against the evil of stealing; *but rather let him labour, working with his hands.* 5. No necessity, or want whatsoever, can warrand a man to imploy himself in any calling, which is not lawfull and honest, or tendeth only to gratifie mens lusts, of pride, vanity, prodigality and uncleanness: this calling ought to be such as he may therein serve

God

God with a good conscience, *Col. 3. 23.* and promote the good, either of the Church, familie, or common wealth, *Gal. 5. 13.* for, to prevent stealing, he doth astrict them in their choise only to good and lawfull callings, while he saith, *Let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good.* 6. The Lords ordinary way is to blesse a mans conscientious diligence in his lawfull calling, with such a measure of successe, as he may have whereby to sustain himself, and to be helpfull unto others, except the Lord see it otherwise fitting, for the mans triall and the exercise of his faith, patience and other graces, *2 Cor. 8. 2.* for, the end of labouring in a lawfull calling, here proponed, is for the most part attained, else it had been no encouragment, even *that he may have to give to him that needeth.* 7. As it is the duty of all whom God hath blessed with any measure of worldly substance, to bestow some part of it for the help of others; So we ought in the exercise of our callings, as we would expect the Lords blessing upon it, to intend, not only the enriching of our selves and ours, but also that we may have whereby to do good unto others: for he sheweth they were to aime at this end, while they wrought with their hands; *that they might have to give to him that needeth.* 8. As not only the rich, but even the poor labourer, who hardly getteth his livelyhood with the work of his hands, is bound to give his mite for the help of the indigent; So we ought to give alms of that which is our own lawfully purchased, and not of the gain of oppression, or hire of an harlot, *Deut. 23. 18.* for, saith he, *Let him work that which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* 9. As the Lord seeth it fitting to keep alwayes some among His People, poor and indigent, even objects of charity, for the exercise of their faith and patience, and for the trial of the charity and compassion of others, *Deut. 15. 11.* So those only are to be relieved by our charity, who are needy, indigent, and cannot relieve themselves: but not such, as, being able to work in a lawfull calling, do rather

rather choose a life of ease and idleness, and to live upon the charity of others: for, he saith, *that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

Verf. 29. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*

HERE is a fourth exhortation, wherein he giveth direction for the right ordering of the tongue: and, first, he forbiddeth them to utter corrupt, or unsavoury and putrified communication, or speech, whereby is meant all discourse, not tending to the glory of God and edification of our neighbour, (as appeareth from the latter part of the verse, where edifying conference is opposed to this corrupt communication) but mainly all obscene, scurril, ranting and arrogant discourse is here intended, even such as argueth a rotten and unrenewed heart, *Matth. 12. 35.* and proveth not only noisom and unsavoury to honest ears, but also contagious and infecting to ordinary hearers, *1 Cor. 15. 33.* even as a stinking breath (unto which he seemeth here to allude) argueth rotten lungs, doth prove unsavoury, yea, and (if the party be taken with any contagious disease) dangerous also unto those who stand by, lest they be infected by it. Next, he enjoyneth the contrary duty, that their discourse and communication should be good, and usefull for the edification of hearers, even such as may minister grace unto them, that is, which may be a mean blessed of God for begetting or carrying on the work of grace in them, and for that end may be so proponed, as it should prove most taking, gracious and acceptable unto them. See upon *Col. 3. -16.* and, *4. 6.* *Doff. 1.* It is the duty of renewed Christians, as to watch over the heart and hand; so in a special way to guard against the sins of the tongue; seeing they must make an accompt to God, even for words, *Matth. 12. 36.* and their sinfull, vain, frothy and rotten discourse doth argue

such a heart, from the abundance whereof the mouth doth speak, *Matth. 12. 34.* yea, and maketh the heart more perverse and wicked, while the corruption which is in it doth strengthen it self by getting vent, *2 Tim. 3. 13.* and proveth also contagious to the hearers, *1 Cor. 15. 33.* for, the Apostle, having dissuaded them from the sins of the heart and hand, doth now dissuade them from the sins of the tongue; *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.* 2. As our corrupt hearts, which in the best are but renewed in part, are very ready to hatch impure, vain and unprofitable corruptions, and to presse the venting of those by the tongue, in vain and corrupt communication; So it is the renewed mans duty, and ought to be his care, to keep a watch at the door of his lips, *Psal. 141. 3.* that, though he cannot get his heart kept from framing such conceptions; yet, at least, he may preserve his tongue from venting of them; seeing our corrupt conceptions do not only prove more dishonourable to God, when they are vented in expressions, but also, in that case they prove offensive and hurtfull unto others, *1 Cor. 15. 33.* for, the Apostle, supposing that such impure stufte would sometimes breed in the heart, and seek a passage, he commandeth, *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.* 3. As there is no sin which wanteth a remedy; So the most proper remedy of every sin, is not only to set against the sin it self, but also to set about the practice of the contrary vertue: for, *Paul* prescribeth this remedy, as against the sins fore-mentioned, so against this, *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good,* saith he. 4. It is not sufficient to refrain our tongue from speaking evil, keeping alwayes silence: but, seeing our tongue is our glory, *Psal. 57. 8.* and given unto us, not only for the use of tasting & carrying down to the throat our meat and drink, but also to expresse the conceptions of our heart, to the glory of God, and edification of our neighbour; therefore, we must also exercise our tongue in speaking what is good: for, so doth

doth the Apostle command, *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good.* 5. It is the duty, not only of Ministers, but of private Christians also (keeping themselves within the bounds of their calling, *Heb. 5. 4.*) to endeavour the edification of those with whom they converse, while they labour either to beget, or carry on the work of grace in them; and this not only by their good example, but by their edifying discourse and communication: for, he speaketh to all indifferently, while he saith, *Let no communication come out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying.* 5. We are not left to run at random in our ordinary discourses, as if we might speak what we please, providing we speak not evil, but are tied only to speak edifying purpose, and this at all times, and with all persons, *Col. 4. 6.* whether we be speaking of things religious, or which appertain to our particular calling, or recreations: for, as it is lawfull and necessary for Christians sometimes to speak of those things; so there is such a way to speak of them, as the hearers may be bettered by our speech; *But that which is good to the use of edifying.* 6. As godly discourse and conference ought to be heard, and entertained by those who are present; So, although the Word preached be the ordinary mean of converting sinners, *Rom. 10. 14, 15.* yet, the Lord is sometimes pleased to bless the familiar and secret discourses of private Christians, being spoken with grace, and seasoned with the salt of divine wisdom, by making them a mean of conveying grace unto others, even to some, whom no publick preaching of the Word could ever move or work upon, *1 Pet. 3. 1.* for, the end of speaking good to the use of edifying here proponed, is attainable, else it had been no strong motive to the duty; *That it may minister grace unto the hearers.*

Verſ. 30. *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are ſealed unto the day of redemption.*

HE doth here inforce the former diſſwaſive, by a ſtrong reaſon ſet down in form of precept: the force whereof, is, firſt, propounded, that by their obſcene unprofitable and unediſying diſcourſe, they would grieve the holy Spirit of God: who is called *holy*, becauſe He is holy in Himſelf, *1ſa. 6. 3.* and the cauſe of all holineſſe in us, *Rom. 15. 16.* And we are ſaid to grieve Him, not, as if He, who is God, could be grieved properly; for, the paſſions of grief, anger, ſorrow, &c. (as implying ſome defect, or imperfection) are not in God, *Numb. 23. 19.* But improperly, and in ſo far, as we do that, which in it ſelf is apt to grieve Him, if He were capable of grief, *Rom. 14. - 15.* and which provoketh the Spirit of God to do that which grieved perſons do, even to withdraw from the ſoul, to ſhew His diſlike, and to return grief for grief. This reaſon is, next, inforced from one work of the holy Spirit in the hearts of Believers, which is here called *ſealing*, by a metaphor taken from that uſe of ſeals and ſignets among men, whereby publick writs are confirmed and made authentick, or, the wares of merchands are marked, and ſet apart for their own uſe. In like manner, the Spirit of God, by renewing and ſanctifying Believers, imprinteth the draughts and lineaments of His own image upon them, whereby they are not only ſet apart and ſealed, as His own peculiar goods, but themſelves alſo may be aſſured that they are His, and ſhall be ſafely-kept under that ſeal untill the day of judgement, called here the *day of redemption*: (See upon chapter 1. ver. 13.) and therefore by grieving the Spirit, they did hazard the removall of this ſeal, at leaſt darken it much, and conſequently mar their own comfort exceedingly. *Doct. 1.* The holy Ghoſt, the third perſon of the bleſſed Trinity, is graciously pleaſed to become in

a singular manner familiar with the truly regenerate, taking up a place of abode in their spirits, and furnishing them with sweet and necessary counsel and advice from time to time, 1 Joh. 2. 27. for, as we shew, His being grieved doth speak His withdrawing from them, and a ceasing from being so friendly and familiar with them, as a stranger will do from an inne, wherein he hath received some affront, which implieth that He was once present and familiar with them; *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God.* 2. How friendly, and familiar soever, the holy Spirit of God be with the believing soul; yet so holy and pure is His Nature, that he can behold no iniquity, *Hab. 1. 13.* but when those that are dearest to Him, give any way to known sin, He must shew Himself displeas'd with it, and with them for it: for, so much is supponed, while the Apostle, dissuading them from sin, sheweth, this holy Spirit of God will be grieved by it; *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God.* 3. However many, by their obscene and putrid discourse, intend no further than to make themselves, or others joviall and glad, *Hos. 7. 3.* yet hereby, and by such other sins of the like stamp, as being against the motions, light and direction of the Spirit, this holy Spirit of God is much displeased, and so much, as persons grieved use to be; and therefore will withdraw His gracious and comforting presence, with all those other tokens of His respect and favour from the person, by whom He hath been grieved, *Isa. 57. -17.* leaving him to be guided for a time by his own spirit, and the spirit of Satan, *Psal. 81. 12.* and giving him over to a kind of desperate grief and hellish horror, *Psal. 32. 3. 4.* or senselesse stupidity, *Isa. 63. 17.* as a just reward for grieving the holy Spirit of God: for, *Paul* sheweth, that by their putrid communication they would grieve the Spirit of God, and make Him do what grieved persons use to do, while he saith, *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God.* 4. As those spirituall plagues, inflicted upon our spirits for grieving of the Spirit of God, and following upon

His withdrawing from us, are most terrible; so the childe of God, not only may, but ought to skare at, and abstain from sin, even that he may be preserved from those spirituall plagues and judgements, though neither love to duty, nor fear of an other correction do constrain him: for, the Apostle laboureth to deter them from the sin of loose speaking, by this consideration, as being of greatest force, even lest thereby they should grieve the Spirit; *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God,* saith he. 5. Though the redemption of Gods children be perfected, in regard of the price payed by Christ, *Job. 19. 30.* yet, in regard of the application of it unto us, it is but begun in this world, and perfected in the next: for, he speaketh of our compleat redemption, as yet to come, *Whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.* 6. Those whom God will compleatly redeem from all sin and misery, both in soul and body, and from whose eyes He will wipe away all tears at the last day, are only such, upon whom the Spirit of God doth imprint the draughts of His own image, in righteousness and holiness, as the impression of the draughts and lineaments of a seal, or by sealing put upon the thing sealed: for, he saith, *by whom,* meaning the holy Spirit, *we are sealed unto the day of redemption.* 7. Upon whomsoever the Spirit of God doth imprint this seal and stamp of true holiness, and of joy, peace and comfort flowing therefrom, all such shall be securely kepted and preserved, as Gods own peculiar treasure by the power of God unto salvation, to be fully manifested and compleatly bestowed at the last day; for, *they are sealed unto the day of redemption,* a metaphor, as we shew, from merchands, who, leaving their wares behind them, do put their mark and seal upon them, untill such a day wherein they will come and own them. 8. By vertue of this sealing and stamp of sanctification, peace and joy imprinted by the Spirit of God upon the hearts of Believers, even they themselves may attain to know assuredly, that they are in the state of grace, and shall be preserved in it untill the
great

great day : for, as this sealing of them, by imprinting the draughts of Gods image upon them, is a discriminating mark betwixt them and others ; so it serveth, not so much to make it known to God, that they are His, who knoweth who are His from all eternity, and anteceden- tally to their effectual calling, 2 *Tim.* 2. -19-- or to make it known unto others, who cannot infallibly dis- cern the grace of God in any but themselves, 1 *King.* 8. -39. as unto themselves ; otherwise the Apostle would not have used a forcible argument not to grieve the Spi- rit, from His sealing of them, if it were a thing which could not be certainly known, but guessed at by them ; *Grieve not the Spirit, by whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.* 9. So far is the work of grace in Belie- vers, or their assurance of being in a state of grace, flowing herefrom, and wrought in them by the Spirit of God, from breeding security and looseness of life, that, by the contrary, there can be no such prevailing argu- ment to make them abhor sin, entertain and follow the motions of the Spirit of God, and consequently to lead an holy life. Not only ingenuity and gratitude, for the favour received, will bind them to it, but also holy fear and circumspection, lest otherwise they mar and darken the seal so as they cannot discern the draughts of it, and consequently lose, though not the seal it self, 1 *Job.* 3. 9. yet the comfort and assurance, which they had by it, *Psal.* 30. -7. for, the Apostle useth this as an argument to keep them from grieving the Spirit by sin, even be- cause they were thereby sealed unto the day of redemption.

Verf. 31. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

HERE is a fifth precept, containing an amplification and illustration of the second, given, ver. 25. concern- ing the restraining of anger : and he doth illustrate it by forbidding the several branches, degrees and effects of

that evil, as, first, *all bitterness*, whereby must be understood here the lowest degree of sinfull anger, even all secret, smothered displeasure and alienation of affection, which hath more of discontent and grudge, than of revenge in it, *Psal.* 37. 1. Secondly, *wrath*, or fierceness, which is an impetuous rage, and passionate commotion of the heart and affections, upon the sense of an apprehended, or reall injurie, preventing and obstructing the use of reason, which being soon up, is as soon allayed, *1 Sam.* 25. 21, 22. with 32. Thirdly, *anger*, which, as it is distinguished from the rest, is an eager desire of revenge, and a fixed resolution, after deliberation, to have that desire satisfied, *Act.* 23. 12. Fourthly, *clamour*, whereby is meant boisterous words, loud menaces, and other inordinate speeches, which are the black smoke, whereby the fire of anger and wrath kindled within, doth first manifest it self, *Act.* 15. 39. Fifthly, *evil speaking*, or *blasphemie*, as the word signifieth, a further fruit of wrath and anger, to wit, disgracefull and contumelious speeches, by which the party incensed doth endeavour to stain the reputation of him, who either really, or to his apprehension only, hath done him wrong, *1 Sam.* 20. 30. And, sixthly, *malice*, which is rooted anger, and continuing wrath, making the person in whom it is, daily intent upon all occasions of revenge, and wholly implacable, untill he get his vindictive humour satisfied, *Rom.* 1. -31-. *Doct.* 1. *Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil-speaking and malice* do grieve the holy Spirit of God, and darken much the work of grace in the heart, whereby he sealeth Believers; there being no sins more opposit to the fruits of the Spirit (mentioned *Gal.* 5. 22.) than those are; so, that where such sins are given way to, grace must be upon the decaying hand: for, the Apostle, unto that command, *grieve not the Spirit*, immediately subjoyneth this, *let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger — be put away*, implying, that otherwise they would grieve the Spirit. 2. So subtil is sin, and so impotent and unskillfull

full are we to resist it, where it once getteth entry, that one degree of sin doth still make way for a further, and so goeth on from evil to worse: and therefore the wisest course is to oppose it betimes, lest by forbearance, it gather strength: for, the Apostle doth here set down severall degrees of sinfull anger, the former whereof, doth still make way for the latter, and the latter is alwayes worse, and a step nearer to the height than the former; *Let all bitternesse, wrath and anger, &c.* 3. It is not enough for Christians to refrain from the venting of their passions in their inordinate expressions and actions; but they must also, and in order to their refraining from those, set about the rectifying of their inward affections and most secret distempers of their spirit: otherwise, if the flame of anger and wrath doth burn within, it will most readily send up a black smoke of clamour and evil speaking, to the offence of others: for, *Paul* forbiddeth not only *clamour and evil-speaking*, but also *all bitternesse, wrath and anger*. 4. Sins of the tongue and outward man, are to be put away and mortified, as well as sins of the heart; they being in some respect more dangerous, *Matth.* 18. 7. because more scandalous, and alwayes implying a defiled heart, from which they flow, *Matth.* 15. 19. and which they render worse than formerly it was; *Let all clamour, and evil-speaking be put away*, saith he. 5. It is not sufficient to suppress, keep at under and weaken our corruptions: we ought to aim at, and rest satisfied with nothing lesse than the totall subduing, through removall, and plucking of them up by the very roots: for, he saith, *Let all bitternesse, &c. be put away*: the word signifieth, *Let it be lifted up*, and so destroyed.

Verf. 32. *And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christs sake hath forgiven you.*

Here is the sixth precept enjoyning the exercise of some vertues, which are opposite unto, and remedies against, those vices presently mentioned. The first whereof, is, *mutuall kindnesse*, a vertue, whereby from a sweet and loving disposition of heart towards all, (*Rom. 12. 10.*) we labour to be affable, easie to be entreated, for the good of others, *Jam. 3. -17-* and of a sweet and amiable carriage towards those with whom we converse, *Rom. 12. 18.* and it is opposite, both to pride of spirit, evidenced in a lofty carriage, *Psal. 10. 2. 3.* and to morosity, or uncivil austerity, *2 Sam. 25. 17.* The second is *tender-heartednesse*, commiseration, or mercy, whereby we are most inwardly and in the very bowels (as the word signifieth) touched and affected with compassion towards the miseries and infirmities of others, so far would he have them from thirsting after revenge. And, thirdly, he recommendeth unto them to give evidence of their kindnesse and tender-heartednesse, in an hearty, free and pleasant pardoning of mutuall wrongs, as the word signifieth. And, lastly, he forceth this dutie of mutuall forgivenesse, from Gods example, in forgiving us all our offences for Christs sake. Concerning which duty of forgiving and pardoning one another here enjoyned, know, first, that, as to the wrong to be forgiven, in so far, as it is alwayes an offence against God, and sometimes against the publick laws of the land, we have not power to forgive it, *1/4. 43. 25.* nor to meddle with it further than by prayer to God, *Jam 5. 14. 15.* and in some cases, by intercession with the Magistrate; but in so far only, as it is a wrong done to us we are to forgive it. Know, secondly, that this forgivenesse implyeth a removall of all inward grudge and endeavour after private revenge, *Lev. 19. 18.* together with

with a readinesse to do all duties of love and kindnesse to him who hath done the wrong, as God doth minister occasion and ability, *Exod. 23.4.5.* Which yet, thirdly, doth not bind us up from having recourse to the Magistrate for attaining restitution to our right, and reparation of our wrongs, providing we go not to law for trifles, *1 Cor. 6. 7.* nor yet before all amicable means be privately essayed. for taking away the occasion of strife, *1 Cor. 6. 5.* See further upon *Col. 3. ver. 13. doct. 3.* Hence, *Learn, 1.* The exercise of kindnesse in a sweet and amicable carriage, is a singular remedy against sinfull anger and all its branches, in so far, as thereby we not only give no occasion of anger unto others, but also do give place unto wrath, *Rom. 12. 19.* whereby it slayeth it self, and we do overcome evil with good: for, as a remedy against all the branches of sinfull anger, formerly mentioned, he enjoyneth *And be ye kind one to another.* 2. The exercise of mercy and tender-heartednesse, is another soveraign remedy against sinfull anger and all its branches, in so far, as thereby we are inabled to look upon the fooleries, infirmities, yea, and other greater injuries done by our neighbour with pity and compassion, which other wise would provoke our anger and passion: for, he enjoyneth this as another remedy against all the branches of sinfull anger, *Be ye tender-hearted.* 3. Then, and not while then, may a man conclude, that wrath and anger are sufficiently mortified, when he is not only in a readinesse to discharge all duties of kindnesse and love to the party who hath injured him, but doth also look upon him for so doing, as one, who is an object of compassion and pity, rather than of passion and anger: for, in stead of bitternessse, wrath, anger and malice against those who had injured them, he enjoyneth, *And be ye kind one to another, and tender-hearted.* 4. The exercise of kindnesse and tender-heartednesse, ought, and will go together, where there is a suitable object for both to work upon, so that kindnesse will not be broken off, because of the miseries and

infirmities of those to whom we owe kindnesse, but rather heightened and helped by an addition of tender-heartednesse and bowels of compassion: for, he commandeth not only *be ye kind one to another*, which respecteth our neighbour under either state, whether of prosperity, or adversity, but also *be tender-hearted*, which respecteth him under misery. 5. Those graces of kindnesse and mercy, are to be exercised especially in the case of wrongs and injuries; yea, the reality of those graces are best tried, not by our exercising them to such as do us no hurt, but in bearing with, and pardoning of those who have given just cause of provocation by real injuries: for, the Apostle will have kindnesse and tender-heartednesse exercised *in forgiving one another*, which supponeth a wrong done. 6. Even those, who have gotten a heart from God to forgive wrongs done to themselves by others, are not so free of infirmities, but they will be sometimes doing reall injuries unto others, and therefore stand in need of forgivenesse themselves: for, so much is implied, while he calleth for mutual performance of this duty, even *forgiving one another*. 7. Only those whom God hath forgiven for Christs sake, can freely, pleasantly, and from the fountain of true love in the heart, forgive those wrongs which are done to them by others: and the more a man hath attained to know, that God hath pardoned himself, he will be the more inclinable to shew forgivenesse unto others: for, he maketh their forgiving of others, a consequence of Gods forgiving them. And therefore, when the Scripture commandeth us to forgive, that we may be forgiven, *Mark 11. 25.* it doth not mean, that our forgiving others doth go before Gods pardoning of us, but is an immediate effect of it, or at the most an antecedent to our sensible perceiving of it; *Forgiving one another, even as God for Christs sake hath forgiven you.* 8. That Gods practice in forgiving us, is an effectuall argument for exciting us to forgive and pardon one another, see upon *Col. 3. 13. doct. 7.* 9. The example
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of God in forgiving us, is not only an argument exciting us to forgive one another, but also a pattern, which we are to resemble in the manner of our forgiveness; not, that our forgiveness can match His in equality or perfection, but in similitude and likeness: which consisteth chiefly in this, that we forgive sincerely, not hypocritically, freely and not unwillingly, fully and not by halves, irrevocably and not for a time only, as He doth, *Matth. 18. 35. Mica. 7. 18. Col. 2. 13. Jer. 31. 34.* for, he saith, *Forgiving one another, even as God hath forgiven you.* 10. Though God hath freely forgiven us; yet He hath seen to the satisfaction of His provoked justice for the wrong done, antecedently to His forgiving of us: which satisfaction, is not exacted of us, but of Christ who was made sin for us, *2 Cor. 5. 21.* And therefore, though we are to imitate God in remitting the private injury done to our selves, and that in the manner mentioned in the preceeding doctrine; yet we have not power to dispense with the injury done to the Justice of God, nor to the publick Laws of the Land; yea, in some cases, the Law of God alloweth that we pursue the party before the Judge, and notwithstanding of our forgiving him, to seek that the Law may strike against him, *Deut. 21. 18, &c. Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

CHAP. V.

THe Apostle, in the first part of this Chapter (having, first confirmed the precept given in the last words of chap. 4. by pressing upon them to imitate God in forgiving one another, from the fountain of love, ver. 1, 2.) doth yet exhort them unto such duties as belong unto all Christians in generall. And, first, he forbiddeth six vices, all of them almost contrary unto chastity: because, first, they are un-

uncomely for Saints, ver. 3. Secondly, inconvenient, ver. 4. Thirdly, they exclude from Gods Kingdom, ver. 5. And fourthly, they bring down Gods wrath, ver. 6. Secondly, he dehortheth from partaking with wicked men in their sins, ver. 7. because of that blessed change wrought in them from darknesse to light, ver. 8. The force of which consequence, is proved from the fruits of light, ver. 9. and (having pointed at the rule of right walking, ver. 10. and explained the precept, set down, ver. 7. by discharging all accession to the sins of the wicked, and enjoyning them to reprove them, ver. 11.) he enforceth yet further the duty so explained, first, from the abominable filthinesse of those sins, ver. 12. Secondly, from the good following upon reproof, even the conviction of the sinner, ver. 13. And, thirdly, from Gods own example, who reproveth the world of sin, and thereby conveyeth light unto them, ver. 14. Thirdly, he exhorteth to circumspect walking, ver. 15. which consisteth mainly in redeeming the time, ver. 16. and, in order hereto, that they would acquaint themselves with Gods revealed will, ver. 17. Fourthly, he exhorteth them to eschew drunkennesse. And, fifthly, to be filled with the Spirit, ver. 18. and to vent that fulnesse of the Spirit, first, in melodious singing of praises unto God, ver. 19. Secondly, in giving of thanks for all things, ver. 20.

In the second part of the Chapter, The Apostle (having premitted a generall exhortation unto all, to submit themselves one to another, ver. 21.) doth presse those duties, which belong to Christians, as they are members of Families: And, first, the duties of wives under the name of *submission*, set forth by the manner of it, *as unto the Lord*, ver. 22: Secondly, by the ground or reason of it, the husbands headship, illustrated from Christs, ver. 23. Thirdly, by the pattern of it, the Churches subjection to Christ. And, fourthly, by the extent of it, to all things, ver. 24. Next, he presseth the duty of husbands under the name of *love*, 1. from Christs love

to His Church, giving Himself for her, ver. 25. and that for two ends, to wit, the sanctification, ver. 26. and glorification thereof, ver. 27. Secondly, from the near union betwixt husband and wife, they being one flesh; and therefore he ought to love her, ver. 28. Because, 1. all men care for their own flesh. 2. Christ careth for His Church, ver. 29. because of the strict union betwixt Him and the Church, ver. 30. And thirdly, the ancient law of Marriage doth expressly enjoin so much, ver. 31. And because he hath spoken of the union betwixt Christ and the Church, he declareth it to be a great and unsearchable mysterie, ver. 32. and so concludeth the purpose, by summing the duties of husbands and wives in two words, *love* and *reverence*.

Verf. 1. **BE** ye therefore followers of God as dear children,

THe Apostle (being to insist further in exhorting to such particular vertues as do belong to all Christians in general of whatsoever rank or station) doth, first, illustrate the sixth and last precept, given, chap. 4. whereby he enjoyned the exercise of mutual kindnesse and mercy in forgiving one another, because of Gods example in forgiving them for Christs sake. Which precept he doth illustrate, first, by reinforcing the duty, together with the motive to it, from Gods example, while, 1. he commandeth them *to be followers of God*, to wit, in the exercise of kindnesse, mercy and forgivenesse: for, according to the present scope, the imitation of God here enjoyned, seemeth to be ascribed unto those particulars, as *Matth. 5. 44, 45.* and *Luk. 6. 35, &c.* though otherwise it may be extended, and elsewhere is extended, unto all those divine vertues, whereof some representation and shadow, at least, ought to be in us, 1 *Pet. 1. 16.* And, secondly, he giveth a reason why they should imitate God thus, even because they were His children by Adoption, and not

not only children, but *dear children*, and dearly beloved by God their Father. All of them did, at least, profess themselves to be such, *Mal.* 1. 6- and the better part of them really were such, *Job.* 1. 12. and therefore they were to imitate Him in the exercise of those virtues, as they would evidence themselves to be of His children. *Dott. 1.* One and the self same action of God, and chiefly His works of mercy towards Believers, are more than one way advantageous unto them, in so far, as thereby not only they are freed from sin and misery, but also have an argument and motive, furnished both unto them on whom He sheweth mercy, whereby they may be incited to their duty of shewing mercy unto others, and to others also to shew mercy unto them: for, he sheweth, that God in forgiving them, had cast a copy to be followed by them in their forgiving one another, while he saith, *Be ye therefore followers of God.* 2. Though we neither ought, nor can imitate God in His works of creation and providence, *Isa.* 14. 13. 14. neither may we presume to imitate Him in any thing further than His revealed will prescribeth as our duty, *Isa.* 8. 20. yet, what ever attributes or actions of His have in them any proportion, or resemblance with any virtue or duty prescribed unto us, we ought to look upon such, as our copy and pattern to be followed by us: for, he saith, *Be ye followers of God*, with relation to His forgiving them for Christs sake. 3. It is not sufficient to do the same things to others, which God hath done to us, except we endeavour to imitate and follow Him in the way and manner wherein He doth them; So as that we do them not from any base or inferiour motive, or for any wrong end; but from a desire to be conform unto Him, and unto what is required of us in the Word by Him: for, this following, and imitating of God here enjoyned, implyeth a purpose and endeavour to conform our selves to Him; *Be ye therefore followers of God.* 4. Gods example in such things as are imitable by us, is the only un-erring pattern, to be absolutely

lutely followed, and without any reserve or limitation : and the practice of any other , is to be followed but so far as their example is conincident with Gods Word and practice. See 1 Cor. 11. 1. where *Paul* commandeth them to follow him with an expresse limitation , to wit, as he was a follower of Christ , but here his command is absolute and unlimited ; *Be ye followers of God.* 5. The Lord doth enter into most intimate friendship with, and taketh on most neer relations unto those , whose sins He pardoneth , So that He doth not only free them from deserved wrath , but placeth them among the children, and maketh them adopted sons and daughters unto Himself: for, here he calleth them *God's dear children*, of whom He said, chap. 4. 32. that *God had forgiven them for Christs sake.* 6. All those who are dear children to God by adoption , should look upon their highest priviledges, as strongest engagements to duty , and particularly set themselves to imitate Him in the exercise of mercy, kindness, forgiveness, and of such other duties as He hath made lovely and amiable by His own example : for, *Paul* maketh their priviledges an engagement to duty, and to imitate God in particular ; *Be ye followers of God as dear children.* 7. It is not sufficient that we set our selves to imitate God , except we do it as dear children , that is, first, humbly, *Matth.* 18. 2. 3. and next, with a kind of naturall affection and propension (for, so do children affect to imitate , and by imitation to please their parents) and not as servants and slaves by compulsion : Hence he saith, *as dear children* , pointing not only at the reason why , but the manner how , they should follow Him.

Verf. 2. *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.*

HE doth , next, illustrate yet further that precept given, chap. 4. ver. 32. and joyntly sheweth where- in they were to imitate God , to wit, not only in for-
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giving, but also in loving one another, and so, as they should *walk in love*; whereby is meant, that all their actions towards their neighbour, ought not only to be good in themselves, but also flow from a principle of love to his good and edification: which duty, or constant task of walking in love, is enforced by a new argument taken from Christ's example, *who loved us*, and did evidence His love by *giving Himself* freely, and of His own accord (*Job. 10. 18.*) even unto death *for us*, or for our sins, *Gal. 1. 4.* which action of Christ is illustrated, first, from the end for which He did give Himself, even to be a propitiatory sacrifice unto God, for expiating all the sins of the Elect, as was fore-signified and typified by all those expiatory leuitical sacrifices under the Old Testament; whether those, which were generally called by the name of *offering*, under which were comprehended all sacrifices, both of living beasts, and of things destitute of life, as flowre, oyle, frankincense, and such-like; or those, which were more strictly called by the name of *sacrifice*, and were of living beasts, and therefore conjoynd with shedding of blood, as the word in the original implyeth, which cometh from a root, signifying to kill and slay: hence it is, that our crucified Lord doth here get the name both of an *offering* and *sacrifice*. This action of Christ is illustrated, next, from its fruit and efficacy, to wit, the rendering of God well-pleased with Christ His offering up Himself, and with the persons and performances of true Believers for His sake, as sweet smelling odours, by reason of their likenesse unto, and agreement with our spirits, are well-pleasing and satisfying unto such as *find them*. *Dact. 1.* Whatever duties of mercy and kindnesse we do discharge unto our neighbour, we do not sufficiently imitate God therein, neither perform service acceptable to Him, if they flow not from a principle of love to our neighbours good and edification, and be not directed thereunto, as the great end of our work next to the glory of God: and therefore a man may do many externall duties

duties of love, and yet not be accepted of God, when his great aim is to be seen of men, *Matth. 6. 2.* or to merit heaven by his good works, *Rom. 9. 31, 32.* without any inward compassion or affection to his neighbour, or a sincere aim towards his good: for, the Apostle sheweth we do only then rightly imitate God in the duties of kindnesse and love, when all we do, floweth from the inward affection of love, and is from love to our neighbour, directed to his good, while he saith, *walk in love.* 2. Our walking in love to our neighbour, as it is formerly explained, and when it floweth from the fountain of love to God, is an evidence of adoption, and of one who is a dear childe to God: for, having spoken of their near relation to God, as being His dear children, he presently enjoyneth them to make so much evident by their *walking in love.* 3. That God the Father doth pardon the sins of the Elect, having given His Son unto death to purchase pardon for them, doth speak His love unto those whom He doth pardon; and that Jesus Christ did willingly give Himself to death for them, doth no lesse speak His unspeakable love unto them also, So that they are equally loved both by the Father and the Son: for, he saith, *as Christ also hath loved us:* the particle *also* relateth to the love of the Father in pardoning for Christs sake, whereof he presently spoke. 4. So necessary is love among Christians, together with those many duties which flow from it; So many are the snares and difficulties, which Satan, our own corrupt natures, and our mutual infirmities do create in our way to keep us from it; that God seeth it necessary to propose the love both of the Father and the Son, as two most powerfull adamantes to draw our backward hearts up towards it: for, saith he, *Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us.* 5. As Christs love to lost sinners, being firmly believed, is a strong argument constraining those whom He hath so loved, to walk in love towards others; that being one of the great things required by Him from those whom He loveth, *Joh. 15. 12.* So, this love of

Christ to us, ought to be a pattern and copy, to which we are to be conformed in our love towards others: and therefore our love ought to be free; for, so was His, *Joh. 15. 16.* It ought to be fruitfull; for, so was His, *Gal. 1. 4.* it ought to be constant; for so was His, *Joh. 13. 1.* it ought to be discreet, not encouraging or humouring the person beloved in sin; for so was His, *Matth. 16. 23.* *And walk in love, as Christ hath loved us,* saith he. 6. Then do we consider the love of Christ aright, and so as to be effectually incited to our duty from the consideration of it, when we look upon it in those effects which flowed from it, and especially in His death and sufferings, and do labour to appropriate by faith the good and benefit of those unto our selves: for, *Paul*, holding forth the love of Christ, as an argument inciting to love one another, doth so look upon it, while he saith, *and hath given Himself for us.* 7. The guilt of sin is so great, as being a breach of Gods most holy Law, and consequently a wrong done against an infinit God, *Psal. 51. 4.* So exact is divine justice in requiring equivalent satisfaction for the wrong done, *Exod. 34. -7.* that, as there is no reconciling of God with man without satisfaction; So no satisfaction, which man himself, or any meer creature could give, was sufficient to do the turn: for otherwise there had been no necessity that Christ should have given Himself for us. 8. What no meer creature could do, Christ Himself, having taken-on the nature of man, hath done, even given full satisfaction to provoked justice, by giving Himself to suffer both in soul (*Isa. 53. 10.*) and body (*Isa. 50. 6.*) in the Elects stead; so that He is taken, and they go free, *Joh. 18. -8.* for, *He gave Himself for us.* 9. The pain and torment both in soul and body, which Christ did give Himself to endure and suffer, was inexpressible, and such, as was fore-signified by what was done with the ancient offerings and sacrifices, according to Gods command: some whereof were killed, slayed, and burnt; some roasted, some fryed on coals, and some seethed in pots: All which are but shadows

dows of what Christ our Lord endured; for, *He gave Himself an offering and sacrifice.* 10. As those leuiticall offerings and sacrifices under the Law, were not sufficient to satisfie divine justice for the sins of the Elect; So Jesus Christ, being offered up to God in death, is that only true and reall sacrifice, wherein provoked justice doth rest satisfied, and whereof all those other sacrifices were but types and shadows: for if they had satisfied justice, there had been no necessity of this other sacrifice, which came in their stead, and so was represented by them; *He gave himself an offering and sacrifice.* 11. Jesus Christ Himself in this offering, was both the Priest, who, as He was God, did offer up Himself, *Heb. 9. 14.* and the Sacrifice which was offered, to wit, as He was man, *Heb. 10. 10.* Yea, and we may add, He was the Altar also whereupon this sacrifice was offered up; the vertue of His God-head being that which not only underpropped His humane nature in suffering, *Isa. 50. 7. 8.* but also did adde an infinite value to His sufferings, as being the sufferings of Him who was God, *Acts 20. -28.* even as the altar doth sanctifie the gift, *Matth. 23. 19.* for, *He gave himself an offering and sacrifice.* 12. The ransom given by Christ for sinners, was payed unto God whom they had wronged, and not unto Sathan whose slaves we are by nature: although by vertue of that ransom we are freed from Sathans slavery and sins dominion, *Heb. 2. 14.* for, God the just Judge being satisfied, Sathan the jealous and unjust tyrant, did lose his right to keep us longer in bonds; *He gave himself an offering and sacrifice* (not to Sathan, but) *to God*, saith he. 13. As sin doth mak us loathsom and unsavourie to God, and stirreth up His wrath against us; So the sweet savour of this one sacrifice, offered up by Christ, being laid hold-upon by faith, appeaseth His wrath, and maketh us saviourie and well-pleasing in His sight: for, so much is implied, while he saith *He gave himself a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour*: a metaphor taken from

men, who when their senses are offended with some stinking savour, cannot be at quiet until some sweet perfume be burnt, which prevaileth above the other : In like manner the noisom smell of our sin, did so move the Lord to wrath, that He would not be at rest, untill the sweet smell of His Sons obedience did come to His nostrils, *Job* 33. 24. 14. It is the only sacrifice of Christ, which by its own vertue doth appease the wrath of God, and make both the persons of the Elect, and their spirituall performances acceptable to God : for, *it is a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.* And though this much be also spoken of other sacrifices, *Gen.* 8. 21. *Exod.* 29. 41. yet it is to be understood of them, not as they were considered in themselves, *Heb.* 10. 1. but as they related to this sacrifice of Christ, whereof they were types, and upon which the godly even then did rely by faith, *Heb.* 11. 4. *Doct.* 15. Whence it followeth and from the text also, that not only an end is put to all those leuiticall sacrifices ; (seeing Christ this true and reall sacrifice, whereof they were types, is offered up already in death) but also that there is no sacrifice, properly so called, to be offered up in the Christian Church, neither of any other thing besides Christ ; neither is that sacrifice of Christ Himself again to be repeated, and consequently that there is no Priest, properly so called, but Christ alone : for, the Apostle sheweth, this one sacrifice did abundantly pacific provoked justice, and therefore there is no need of any other : besides that the vertue of it is perpetual, *Heb.* 10. 14, 18. and so it needeth not to be reiterated ; *A sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.*

Verf. 3. But fornication, and all uncleannesse, or covetousness, let it not be once named amongst you, as becometh Saints.

THe Apostle cometh now to give some new precepts. And, first, in this and the following verse, he forbiddeth six vices, all of them, for the most part, contrary to chastity prescribed in the seventh command. Three
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of which vices are in the outward actions, and forbidden in this verse. 1. *Fornication*, or the sin of filthinesse, between parties, both free from the yoke of marriage, 1 Cor. 7. 2. a sin looked upon as a thing indifferent, and no sin among the Gentiles, 1 Cor. 6. 12. 2. *Uncleanesse*, under which are usually comprehended all other sorts of filthy lusts between any parties whatsoever. 3. *Covetousnesse*, that is, an immoderate desire (Heb. 13. 5.) to acquire (*Micah* 2. 2.) or to preserve worldly goods, *Prov.* 11. 14, 26. All which he doth so discharge, as that they should not name them, to wit, with delight, and without detestation; otherwise it is lawfull to name them while we reprove them, as the Apostle here doth: and he urgeth this prohibition from the state wherein they were, as being Saints, separated from the world, and dedicated to God; and therefore it were most unseemly for them to defile themselves with such filthy lusts. *Doct.* 1. True Christian-love unto our neighbour, whereby we endeavour his preservation and good in his honour, person, chastity, outward estate and good name, (*Rom.* 13. 9.) doth hugely differ from fleshly love flowing from lust, and from the love of the world, whereby we seek to satisfie our own sinfull lusts, with our neighbours hurt: for, the former was enjoined, ver. 2. but the latter is here forbidden; *But fornication, and all uncleannesse, or covetousnesse, &c.* 2. The generall prevalency of any sin, ought neither to make people give more way to it, nor Ministers speak lesse against it; but rather, because, the more common any sin is, God getteth the more dishonour by it; therefore the zeal of publick Ministers and private Christians ought to be so much the more intended against it: for, because fornication was so common among the Gentiles, that it was hereby looked upon as no sin, therefore doth Paul, almost in all his Epistles to the Churches of the Gentiles, fall upon it, as he doth also here; *But fornication, and all uncleannesse, &c.* 3. So violent is the lust of filthinesse, that, if it be not all the more carefully guarded

against, there is no state of life, wherein it will not break forth, even although the ordinary mean of marriage appointed by God to prevent it (1 Cor. 7. 2.) be used: for, he will have them to guard not only against fornication, which is the sin of filthinesse between parties unmarried, but also against *all uncleannesse*, that is, all other sorts of filthy lusts, whereof filchinesse between married parties is one. 4. There is a great affinity and sibnesse between the lusts of filchinesse and covetousnesse; in so far, as the former, given way to, doth necessitate the lascivious wretch to thirst after, and by indirect means to purchase worldly goods, that so he may have wherewith to uphold, (as his other lusts, *Jam. 4. 3.* so) in a speciall manner this lust of uncleannesse: for, therefore doth he forbid those two lusts joyntly; *But fornication, and all uncleannesse, or covetousnesse.* 5. It is not sufficient for Saints to abstain from the outward practice of grosse evils, except their outward abstinence do flow from inward detestation of them; otherwife, outward abstinence may well make a good Civilian, but not a sincere Christian: for, *Paul* will have them abstaining from the formentioned evils, so as not to name them with delight, and without detestation; *Let it not be once named among you.* 6. Not only the outward act of filchinesse, but also lascivious filthy discourse, is to be refrained from, as that, which is an evidence of inward love to that sin, *Matth. 12. 34.* and maketh way for the outward committing of it, not only by our selves, while the inward flame of lust is blown up by the bellows of filthy speeches, *Jam. 3. 6.* but also by others, who are easily infected by the pestilentious breath of evil communications, 1 Cor. 15. 33. for, he will not have those evils so much as spoken of among them with delight and without detestation; *Let it not be once named among you.* 7. The only life becoming Saints, is to keep themselves pure in heart, in tongue, in hand, from the pollutions of fleshly lusts, and the immoderate love of worldly goods: and in so far, as those are given way to by professed Saints,

Saints, they walk unworthy of their high and heavenly calling; do stain their profession; and declare themselves unworthy of the name of Saints: for, he sheweth that not practising those evils, and inward detestation of them, made evident by their not speaking of them, was such a carriage as *becometh Saints*.

Verf. 4. *Neither filthinesse, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.*

IN this verse he forbiddeth other three vices, which belong mainly to the tongue. 1. *Filthinesse*, whereby is meant, in general, whatsoever is contrary to decency and Christian gravity or modesty, whether in deeds, words, or outward gesture and adorning of the body: for, so the word is used, 1 Cor. 11. 6. But here, because this sin and the rest are opposed to giving of thanks, it seemeth to be restricted to filthy speaking, or speaking of those things which belong to the lust of uncleannessse. 2. *Foolish talking*, which, as being contradistinct to the vice which goeth before, and to that which followeth after, doth comprehend all impertinent, superfluous, rash and roving discourse, which doth rather bewray the speakers folly and indiscretion, than any way edifie the hearers, though it be neither filthy speaking, nor satyrick jesting. 3. *Jesting*: the word in the originall, is sometimes taken in a good sense, and so it signifieth a dexterity in allaying (when it is necessary so to do) the too much severity of countenance and discourse with a quick and honest sport, for begetting honest recreation and moderate laughter; that thereby the mind may be the more fitted to go about serious things in a serious manner, Eccles. 3. 4. Such honest and sometimes piercing Ironies we find used by holy men in Scripture, 1 King. 18. 27. Phil. 3. - 2. But here it is taken in an evil sense for scurrility, when men do make it their exercise to shew the sharpnesse of their wit in jesting, and

to beget not moderate recreation of spirit in order to their fitting for a more serious purpose, but immoderate laughter, and carnall mirth in the hearers: and especially, when, in order to this end, they spare not offensive jests by tart reflections upon the way, gesture, yea, and personall imperfections of others; nor yet profane and impious jests, by wresting Scripture to expresse the conceptions of their light and wanton wits: now, the Apostle forbiddeth all those three, because they are *not convenient*, or bebecoming to Saints, so that this reason is coincident with the former, ver. 3. And in opposition to all those, he recommendeth unto them for their mutuall cheering, and edifying one another by discourse when they should meet, rather to recount what favours they had received from God, and to blesse Him for them.

Doct. 1. As there are many wayes by which a man may transgresse with his tongue; so we ought to guard against all transgressions of that kind: not only those, which naturall reason would blush to patronize, but others also, which are pleaded-for by many, and defended as laudable strains of a quick wit: for, he forbiddeth not only *filibinesse*, but also *foolish talking and jesting*. 2. Satan and corrupt nature do take advantage of mens naturall temper and inclination, even of that, which in it self is not sinfull, thereby to stir them to sinfull courses to get their inclination satisfied: for, from this sociable temper and inclination in men to entertain one another by discourse, he taketh advantage to put them upon those sins of *filthy speaking, foolish talking and jesting*. 3. It is a task of no small difficulty to keep within the bounds of lawfull and allowed mirth and recreation, especially in recreating our spirits by pleasant and delightfull discourse, so that we exceed not either in matter or manner; considering that what is inoffensive at one time and place, and to some persons, may be irritating and offensive at, and to others: for, therefore it seemeth the Apostle designeth this vice in speech by that name, which (as I shew) agreeth also to that which

is lawfull and allowed, implying, that in this particular there is an easie passage from what is allowed to that which is forbidden; *And jesting*, saith he. 4. It is not sufficient for Ministers to forbid and reprove sins under such and such general heads; but, seeing people either through ignorance cannot, or wickednesse will not see, or lazinesse care not to see the evil of severall particular sins contained under those generall heads; therefore they are bound in their reproofs and prohibitions to fall upon the particular branches and instances of that evill, which they speak against: for, the Apostle, chap. 4. ver. 29. having spoken against corrupt communication in the general, doth here enumerate three distinct branches of that evill; *filthy speaking, foolish talking, and jesting*. 5. Called Saints and Christians should be so tender in walking, as that they feare not only at those evils which are palpably grosse and cryed-out against by all; but also at every other thing which is unbecoming their profession, or inconvenient and disadvantageous to the Gospel or their own peace: for, the Apostle dissuadeth from those sins upon this ground, that *they are not convenient*. 6. A choice remedy against filthy speaking, foolish talking, jesting, and other sins in our ordinary communication, is, to have our hearts alwayes kepted so sensible of Gods goodnesse, and so desirous to expresse what sense we have thereof unto others, that, whenever occasion offereth, we may gladly lay hold on that subject rather than on any other, and thereby provoke others to do the like: for, so we should not be necessitated (as oft-times in a kind we are) to fall upon sinfull, vain and idle communication through penury and want of better purpose: hence the Apostle, as a remedy against the fore-mentioned evils, prescribeth *giving of thanks*. 7. There is not any case incident to a Christian, but if he search thoroughly, there will be found some ground for thanksgiving and rejoycing, though not in himself, yet in Gods dealing with him, whether for mercies bestowed, or judgments not inflicted, *Philip.*

2. 27. for, while Paul commandeth them to exercise themselves, and cheer up one another with giving of thanks, in stead of foolish talking and jesting, he supponeth there will be alwayes reason of thanksgiving; *But rather giving of thanks.* 8. Though Saints may, and are bound sometimes, and in some cases to confesse their faults one to another, *Jam. 5. 16.* and consequently may regrave their spiritual losses and decay; yea, and may also speak of what concerneth their worldly affairs, *Gen. 31. 38.* Yet, it is not only most seemly, but also a thriving way for the inward man, not to dwell alwayes upon heartlesse regrades for what they want; but to adde, at least, a mixture of chearfull acknowledgement of what they already have, giving hearty thanks to God for it: for, as the Apostle doth not astrict them only to giving of thanks in their conference and discourse; So he doth recommend it, as the choicest subject to be most frequently insisted on: *But rather giving of thanks.*

Verf. 5. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor uncleau person, nor covetous man who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, and of God.

HE doth further inforce the dehortation by a new argument, wherein is more of terrour than in the former: and that it may be more terrible and pungent, he appealeth to their own conscience and knowledge for the truth of what he is to affirm, to wit, that all impenitent persisters (for of such only this and the like threatenings are to be understood, *Jer. 18. 7. 8.*) in any of those three vices, mentioned, *ver. 3.* (which holdeth also by proportion in the other three, mentioned, *ver. 4.* as being so neer of kin to the former) were deprived of all present right unto, and should never come to the possession of that blessed state of eternal glory in heaven: which glorious state is here called a *Kingdom* and *inheritance*, (See reasons hereof upon *Gal. 5. 21. doct. 9.*)

and

and the Kingdom of Christ, because it is His, as He is Mediator, by donation from the Father, *Psal.* 2. 8. in so far as the Father hath intrusted Him with the administration of the Kingdom of grace here, *Matth.* 28. ver. 18. by which means, an entrance is made for the Elect into the Kingdom of glory, *Job.* 14. 2, 3. It is called also the Kingdom of God (or the whole persons of the blessed Trinity, distinct from Christ as Mediator) because it is Gods by originall right, and as absolute King of this Kingdom, who is accountable to none, *1 Cor.* 15. 28. This argument is further strengthened by joyning another upon the by with it; while he deterreth them from one of the fore-mentioned evils, to wit, covetousnesse, by calling the covetous man an Idolater; because he setteth his prime affections of love and confidence upon riches, *1 Tim.* 6. 16. *Prov.* 18. 11. holdeth them for an universal good, sufficient for all things, *Luk.* 12. 19. as God only is *2 Cor.* 9. 8. and because he beareth such respect unto them, that he dare not freely make use of them, *Eccles.* 6. 2. and serveth them with his heart as some god-head, *Matth.* 6. -24. Hence, *Learn*, 1. So strong is the interest of sin, even in the best; and so violent are those tentations especially, which drive men towards the fulfilling of their fleshly lusts, That although a man be convinced of the great evil which is in them, and the losse of heaven which doth follow upon his living in them; yet there is no small hazard, when such tentations are presented, of yeelding to them: for he taketh it for granted they knew the hazard of living in those sins, and yet doth see it necessary to set them on their guard against them; for, *this ye know, that no whoremonger, &c.* 2. The Lords servants are not to flatter people in any beloved sin, upon pretence of rendering them thereby more tractable and obedient in other things; but must discover the evil of all sin, excepting none, though it were never so generally practised, yea, and pleaded-for by those to whom they preach: for, this sin of uncleanness, chiefly of fornication, was commonly practised and

and pleaded-for as no sin among the Gentiles; yet *Paul*, at his first preaching the Gospel to those *Ephesians*, had spoken against it, and convinced them of the ill which is in it: Hence, he saith so confidently, *for this ye know, that no whoremonger--hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ.* 3. As this doth highly aggreage a sin, that it is committed against our knowledge; So the more and weightier aggravations that any sin is liable unto, when it is committed, we ought to be the more deterred from the committing of it: for, he mindeth them of their knowing the danger that would follow upon those sins, hereby implying, their guilt would be the more weighty, if they should commit them, that so they might be deterred from them; *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, &c.* 4. Prohibitions and threatnings denounced in Scripture against any grosse externall sin, are to be extended unto all the causes, means, occasions and appearances of that sin, and provocations to it: for, this threatening against whoredom and uncleanness, is to be applied unto filthy speaking, foolish talking and jesting (as being either causes, occasions, appearances of, or provocations unto those) otherwise the threatening would not be of force to presse the former dehortation in its full latitude: *No whoremonger, nor unclean person--hath any inheritance.* 5. The doolfull sad event, and dreadfull consequence of sin, would be seriously represented by *Christ's* servants unto the *Lords* people, and by people to their own conscience; there being nothing of greater force to cool the vehement heat of sinfull lusts, than the frequent and serious consideration of their dreadful issue: for, *Paul*, to scare them from fornication and uncleanness, presenteth unto them the event of all such work, even losse of heaven and happiness; *No whoremonger--hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ.* 6. The reign of sin in the heart, cannot consist with true grace and a right to heaven; and therefore the truly regenerate, in whom the seed of *God* abideth, are never so far left of *God*, as that sin should reign in them, and

and they give willing obedience to it with the full swey and consent of the heart : There must be alwayes a party acting for God in some degree lesse or more within them, at least not consenting to act against Him, even when they are at the worst, and possibly overcome with some grosse temptation : in which respect, they cannot be the whoremonger, unclean or covetous person here spoken of, to wit, one in whom such sins reign : for, saith he, none such *have any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ.* He speaketh of somewhat which they presently want, and others have, which must be a right to the Kingdom of glory, or a present portion in the Kingdom of grace.

7. To whatsoever a man doth give that outward or inward worship and service, which is only due to God, that thing, though it were never so base, is that man's god, who is thereby rendered guilty of Idolatry, and of giving divine worship unto a false God, though he think not so : for, the covetous man is called an Idolater, and consequently riches are his god ; because he setteth his prime affections of love and confidence upon them in that measure which is only due to God ; *Nor covetous man who is an Idolater.* 8. There is no access to lost sinners unto the Kingdom of God in glory, but by Jesus Christ the Mediator, who is the way, the truth and the life, and without whom none cometh unto the Father, *Job. 14. 6.* for, it is *the Kingdom of Christ and of God* : Christ is first named, because we make entrance by Him in this Kingdom.

Verf. 6. *Let no man deceive you with vain words : for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*

THE Apostle, in this verse, doth, first, give them a watchword to guard against the suggestions of any who would labour to perswade them, that either the practices reprov'd were no sins at all, or at least not so dangerous, as he affirmed ; and calleth all such suggestions

gestions *vain*, or *deceiving words*, as having no solidity of truth in them, but only some plausible pretext. Secondly, he confirmeth, and further strengtheneth the former argument, while he sheweth, that not only these sins do exclude from heaven, but also because of those, *Gods wrath*, that is, temporall and eternall judgments, the effects of *Gods wrath*, or of His holy sin-pursuing justice, doth come, and is alwayes, and at all times coming *upon the children of disobedience*, that is, those, who, having willingly hardened themselves in wickednesse, are judicially plagued with hardnesse of heart. See upon chap. 2. ver. 3. *Doct. 1.* The servants of Jesus Christ, ought to be through and serious in the reproof of sin, not doing the work of the Lord negligently, or by halfe: they must not only start and discover those sins, which the Lord's people are in hazard to be surprized with, and to lay open the dangerous, dreadful and doolfull consequences of living in them; but also pursue them through all the lurking holes and subterfuges of specious pretences and fecklesse excuses, under which they use to lurk, untill no place of refuge be left for them in peoples hearts: for, so doth *Paul*, having forbidden those evils, and shown the dangerous consequence of living in them, he striketh off at one word the fig-tree leaves of all such vain excuses, whereby sinners use to plead for them; *Let no man deceive you with vain words*, saith he, 2. So corrupt and fleshly are we by nature, that we are not only prone and bent to commit sin, but also ingenious and witty to excuse and extenuate our sin, and thereby to seduce our own hearts into a belief that either sin is no sin, or that we shall be free of judgment, though we live in sin: for, those who labour to deceive others this way, by making them think light of sin, do first deceive themselves; *Let no man deceive you with vain words*, saith he. 3. It is the usuall course and strain of those who have given themselves over unto the slavery of sin, to use the utmost of their wit and endeavours to draw on others to do the like, and for

for this end to deceive them, by making them believe that sins are but petty slips, small escapes, humane infirmities, that God's patience suffereth all things, that His grace pardoneth every thing, that no man can be perfect, and the rarest Saints have fallen in as great faults, and such like vain words, which the Apostle doth here guard against; *Let no man deceive you with vain words.*

4. All such opinions and reasonings as tend to cast a covering over sin, to extenuate and hide the villenness of it, and the terrour of judgment belonging to it, are but vain, even spiders webs, sandy foundations, fig-tree leaves, untempered mortar, and will in end but mock all those who listen to them: for, so doth the Apostle affirm of them, *Let no man deceive you with vain words.*

5. Though we are to fear and avoid sin principally, because it is sin, and displeasing to God, supposing there were no hell nor punishment due to sin, *Gen. 39. 9.* yet, we may and ought in the second place fear and abstain from it, because it draweth down Gods wrath and judgement: for, he holdeth forth the terrour of Gods wrath as an argument to scare them from those sins; for, *because of these things cometh the wrath.*

6. The terrible threatnings denounced in Scripture against such and such sinners, some whereof declare the sinners exclusion from heaven, and others his unspeakable torment in hell, are verified not in all, who have once or often fallen in any such sins, but in those only, who have hardened themselves in them, rejecting all admonitions to the contrary, and do remain obstinate and impenitent untill death: for he expoundeth whom he meaneth by the whoremongers, whom he threatned, *ver. 5. even children of disobedience,* that is, such as remain obstinate, and will not be perswaded, as the word rendered *disobedience* doth signifie. 7. See severall other Doctrines from the like words, upon *Col. 3. ver. 6.*

Verf. 7. *Be not ye therefore partakers with them.*

Here is a second precept more generall than the first, and inferred as a conclusion from the former argument, whereby he doth in generall dehort them from partaking, or concurring with such obstinate sinners, either in the forementioned sins, or any other, wherewith they polluted themselves and drew down the stroak of Gods wrath, as they would not partake with them in their judgements; for so he doth explain this precept, ver. 11. *Doct. 1.* As the Lord doth of purpose inflict most memorable judgements upon obstinate sinners, even in this life; that thereby, as by one mean amongst many other, He may teach and instruct His own called children to beware of their sins; So, then do we make right use of Gods judgements upon such godlesse sinners, when we are not idle spectators of them, as if we were not concerned in them, *Luk. 13. 2, 3.* or murmurers against the severity of Gods justice manifested in them, *Numb. 16. 41.* but do take up the voice of those rods, as speaking unto, and pressing upon our selves the exercise of repentance and tender walking, in abstaining from such like sins, for which they are smitten: for, from what he spoke of Gods wrath coming upon the children of disobedience, he inferreth this as a most native use, *Be not ye therefore partakers with them.* 2. Though there be some sins, for which the Lord doth punish obstinate sinners more than others, which usually are more clearly written upon their rods, *Judg. 1. 7.* yet, it is our wisdom to look upon their judgements, as speaking lessons, and real warnings, not only against those evils, but all others also, whereof they are guilty: for, he inferreth that they would not partake with them, not only in the fore-mentioned sins, for which in a speciall manner wrath came upon them, but also in any sin of theirs whatsoever, while he saith in generall, *Be ye not therefore partakers with them.* 3. The Lord taketh notice

notice of, and doth accordingly punish sinners, not only who are without the Church and heathens, but also those, who are within the Church, and do profess subjection unto divine Ordinances; and not only ring-leaders, and chief actors in a sinfull course, but also all assisters, abettors, and who in any measure partake of the sins of others, whether by counselling, (2 Sam. 13. 5.) alluring, (Prov. 1. 10.) consenting, (1 King. 21. 19.) connivance, (1 Sam. 3. 13.) or applauding sin when it is committed, Rom. 1. 32. for, he will have the converted Ephesians take warning from those judgments, which were inflicted upon the godlesse heathens, and so, as not to partake with them in their sins, implying, God would not spare them more than others; *Be ye not therefore partakers with them.*

Verf. 8. *For ye were sometimes darknesse, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light,*

IN this verse, there is, first, an argument to enforce the former dehortation, taken from that blessed change which was wrought in them from darknesse to light, *they were once darknesse*: whereby is meant their estate before conversion: And it comprehendeth under it, ignorance of God. and of the way to heaven, 1 Job. 2. 8. a godlesse and profane life, flowing from a wicked and unrenewed heart. 1 Job. 1. 6. together with subjection unto all miseries and calamities following upon the former, and especially to the wrath and curse of God: for, a sad disconsolate case goeth under the name of *darknesse*, Amos 5. 18, 20. This is the state, under the which they once were, and all unregenerate men yet are: they are in all those respects, not only dark, but *darknesse* in the abstract, as having nothing of the contrary light in them. But they were *now light*: whereby is meant that estate wherein they now were, being converted, which is opposed to their former estate of darknesse, and comprehendeth under it the saving knowledge of God

- in Christ, *Iſa.* 9. 1, 2. a life conform to Gods Law, which shineth forth in the rayes and beams of good works, as a light unto others, *Matth.* 5. 16. together with
- deliverance from Gods wrath, and restitution to His favour, with joy, peace, and filiall confidence flowing from the sense of those: for, a lightſome and comfortable caſe goeth uſually under the name of light, *Pſal.* 18. 28. This is the ſtate, wherein the truly regenerate are;
- They are in all thoſe reſpects not only lightſome, ſplendid and ſhining, but *light* in the abſtract, not as if there were no darkneſſe in them at all, 1 *Job.* 1. 8. *Act.* 14. 22. for, in that reſpect only God Himſelf is light, 1 *Job.* 1. 5.
- but becauſe they are ſo *in the Lord*, to wit, Chriſt, (chap. 4. 5.) as he here declareth, who not only is the purchaſer and worker of that meaſure of the light of knowledge, holineſſe, and of joy and peace following thereupon, which the regenerate do already enjoy, *Job.* 1. 9. but alſo His moſt perfect light of righteouſneſſe, knowledge, wiſdom and redemption, is imputed to them, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. ſo that the dregs and remainders of ignorance and corruption in themſelves, are not laid to their charge, *Numb.* 23. 21. The Apoſtle, next, from this argument, doth infer the affirmative of the former negative precept, ver. 7. to wit, that therefore they ſhould *walk as children of the light*, that is, anſwerably unto that bleſſed ſtate of light, to which they were called, as being now children of light, that is, not only born of God, 1 *Job.* 2. 29. (who is that light unacceſſible, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) by the preaching of the word, *Jam.* 1. 18. which is called *light*, *Pſal.* 119. 105. but alſo were endued with the light of knowledge and holineſſe: In which reſpect, thoſe, who are endued with wiſdom, are called children of wiſdom, *Matth.* 11. -19. Hence, *Learn*, 1. It concerneth thoſe, in whom God hath wrought any ſaving change, as to be reflecting frequently upon that miſerable eſtate wherein they once were; So to look upon it under that variety of notions and ſimilitudes, whereby it is expreſſed in Scripture; there being

being not any one expression so comprehensive, or similitude so far extended, as to point out all the dool, woe and misery which is in it, and that hereby the heart may be the more sensibly affected with it: for, the Apostle hath now severall times in this Epistle represented it to their view, and at every time almost under a different notion and similitude; the latter alwayes expressing somewhat, which was not reached by the former. See chap. 2. ver. 1, 2, 3, 12, 13, 19. and chap. 4. ver. 17, 18, 19. And here again, he mindeth them of it under the name of *darknesse*; for, *ye were sometimes darknesse*. 2. The childe of God ought so to remember what he once by nature was, as not to question, far lesse deny, but confidently avow what he now by grace is: and that because not only the joynt consideration of both, maketh them shine forth more clearly in their own colours; but also our fixing our eye upon the former, without avowing the latter, doth breed discouragement, unthankfulness, and in progresse of time heartlesse dispare of an outgate from the wofull state wherein we apprehend our selves yet to be: for, the Apostle representeth to their view both those joyntly; *Ye were sometimes darknesse, but now ye are light*. 3. Believers can never attain to read the happinesse of their present state through grace, so long as they fix their eye only upon what they are in themselves: nor yet untill they consider what they are in Christ, and by vertue of that fulnesse of perfections in Him, which not only floweth forth to them in the streams according to their measure, *Joh. 1. 16.* but also is imputed to them in the fountain, *1 Cor. 5. 21.* and therefore may be looked upon by them as their own; for, although he calleth them *darknesse* absolutely, and in themselves; yet *they are light*, not in themselves, *but in the Lord Christ*. 4. Our former darknesse of ignorance and profanity, wherein we have for a long time lived, is so far from being an argument to make us continue in our former wofull course; that on the contrary, we ought from the consideration thereof be incited to take

up our selves and live more tenderly for the time to come ; seing the time past of our life may suffice us to have walked in a godlesse course, 1 *Pet.* 4. 3. for, *Paul* maketh this an argument, why they should not any longer partake with obstinate sinners in their godlesse course : for, saith he, *ye were sometimes darknesse.* 5. Neither long continuance in sin already, even to wearinesse, nor yet any conviction of the shame and dammage which do attend it, are sufficient to make a man abandon and quit it throughly, except there be a gracious change wrought in him, chiefly as to his inward state, from that which he sometimes was : for, he mentioneth this gracious change of their inward state, as that, wherein the strength of the present argument doth ly, whereby he would dissuade them from being partakers with them ; for *ye were sometimes darknesse, but now are ye light in the Lord.* 6. As all spirituall priviledges in generall, are bestowed upon us, that we may improve them, both for our comfort, and also for enabling and inciting to duty ; So the more we enjoy of light, whether external light in preaching of the Word, or the internal light of knowledge in the mind, we ought to improve it the more by walking according to that light ; else our condemnation shall be greater, *Job.* 3. 18. for, from their priviledge of being *light in the Lord*, he inferreth *walk as children of light.*

Verf. 9. (For the fruit of the spirit is in all goodnesse, and righteousness, and truth)

THe Apostle, in way of parenthesis, doth give a reason of the former consequence, or why their being now *light in the Lord* did hind them to *walk as children of light* ; and consequently, not to partake with obstinate sinners in their sin : and withall, sheweth wherein that walking doth consist. The reason is taken from the new creature and habits of grace in the heart, called here the *Spirit*, as *Rom.* 7. 25. *Gal.* 5. 22. and are the

the same with the light of grace by the Spirit of God, spoken of, ver. 8. Now, he sheweth the fruit of this light, or of those gracious habits, consisteth in the exercise of all Christian vertues, which are here summed up in three, 1. *Goodnesse*, whereby we are inclined to communicate what good is in us for the advantage of our neighbour, both in his spirituall (1 Pet. 4. 10.) and bodily (Gal. 6. 10.) estate. 2. *Righteousnesse*, whereby we deal righteously in all our transactions with others. And, 3. *Truth*, whereby we carry our selves sincerely, being free from error, hypocrisie, or dissimulation, whether towards God or men. So the force of the argument cometh to this, Such a walking as he did enjoin, was the native fruit and result of their being made light in the Lord by the Spirit of God; and therefore they were obliged to it. *Doct. 1.* It is the duty of Christs Ministers, not only to presse upon the Lords people the practice of holinesse in generall, but also to condescend upon, and accordingly to presse the exercise of those particular vertues both to God and men, wherein holinesse doth consist; otherwise people will readily place most of holinesse in those things wherein it consisteth least, *Matth. 23. 23.* for, *Paul*, having exhorted them to walk as children of the light, doth here shew wherein that walking doth consist, even in all *goodnesse, and righteousness, and truth.* 2. None can walk as a childe of light, or practise those duties wherein such a walk consisteth, in a way acceptable to God, but he who is a childe of light, truly regenerate, and acteth from a principle of grace in the heart. Whatever floweth from an unrenewed heart, how specious soever, is but a shadow, and imperfect imitation of the childe of light in this christian walk, as an ape would imitate a man, or a violent motion doth resemble that which is natural, and floweth from an inward principle: for, he sheweth the exercise of goodnesse, righteousness, and truth, wherein our walking as a childe of light consisteth, is the fruit of the Spirit, or of the root of grace in

the heart, wrought by the Spirit of God ; *For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodnesse, &c.* 3. As it concerneth Christians to walk suitably unto their state and privileges ; So they would seriously consider, in order to their walking thus, that holinesse of life is the native fruit and result of their being in a gracious state, or of the work of grace in the heart ; and therefore, that they are not only obliged to lead an holy life in way of duty and gratitude, but a necessity also doth ly upon them to it, if so they be renewed, and as they would not evidence themselves to be yet in their unrenewed state : for, having exhorted them to walk as children of light, or suitably to the state of grace, he inforceth the exhortation, by shewing, that such a walking is the native fruit and necessary result of being in such a state ; *For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodnesse, &c.* 4. A facility and easinesse to communicate what is in us for our neighbours good and advantage, doth well consist with the exercise of righteousness, whereby we give every man his due, and do require of him what is our due from him : for, he conjoyneth the exercise of those two, while he saith *the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodnesse, and righteousness.* 5. As the grace of sincerity and freedom from dissimulation and hypocrisie, is a necessary ingredient in the exercise of all other vertues ; So our walking answerably unto that state of light, unto which we are called, must be extended unto duties of all sorts : not only to duties of goodnesse and righteousness towards our neighbour, but also to duties towards God, so as we imbrace those Truths, which He holdeth forth in Scripture without all mixture of Error, yea, and take Him for our party in every duty, as being the only judge of our sincerity ; for, he saith, *The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodnesse, and righteousness, and truth.*

Verf. 10. *Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.*

BEfore the Apostle use any more arguments to inforce the former precept, he doth, first, resume and explain the precept it self. And, first, he explaineth the affirmative part thereof, by giving one direction, necessary to be practised by those who would walk as children of light, even that by diligent search and enquiry they prove and try according to God's will revealed in His Word, (*Isa. 8. 20.*) what is acceptable, and well pleasing unto Him in every step of their way. *Doct. 1.* There is no walking as a childe of light, or suitably unto that gracious state to which we are called, except we conform our selves, not unto this world, *Rom. 12. 2.* or to what may bring about our own advantage, and so gratifie our lusts, *Matth. 5. 29.* but unto what is acceptable to God, and prescribed unto us as the rule of duty in His Word: for, this proving of what is acceptable unto Him, is required not for it self, or to rest thereon, but to regulate our practice accordingly; (*See ver. 11. doct. 1.*) and is called-for as a necessary concomitant of walking like children of light, as is clear from the grammatical construction, according to which this verse is to be joyned with the close of the eighth; so that it runneth thus, *Walk as children of the light — proving what is acceptable.* 2. We cannot conform our selves unto what is acceptable to the Lord, and consequently cannot walk as children of light, except we make a serious search and enquiry into the rule of duty and acceptation revealed in the Word, yea, and do what we do, that we may come up to that rule: and therefore we walk not acceptably, when either we do things rashly without deliberation, *Prov. 19. 2.* or doubtingly after deliberation, *Rom. 14. 23.* yea, nor when the thing done, is in it self right and acceptable, but we do it not from that ground, but to gratifie our own lusts, *Matth. 6. 2.* or the lusts of others, *Gal. 1. - 10.* for, in order to
this

this walking, he requireth them to prove what is acceptable to the Lord, as the rule by which they were to walk.

3. It is not sufficient to make this inquiry in order to some few and weighty actions of our life, but in order to all, whether of greater or lesser concernment, whether advantage or losse may probably follow upon our conforming of our selves unto this rule: for, the direction is indefinit without any limitation or restriction unto this action, or that; and therefore it ought to be extended unto all; *Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.* 4. The finding out of what is acceptable unto the Lord, especially in some intricate cases, is not easily attained: there must be an accurate search, together with an exercising our selves in the practice of those things, which we already know to be acceptable, that so we may experimentally know them to be such, and get our knowledge bettered in those things, whereof we are yet ignorant, *Job. 7. 17.* for, the word rendred *proving*, signifieth an accurate proof, not so much by argument, as by trial and experience, as gold is tried in the fire, *Jam. 1. 12.* *Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.*

Verf. 11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darknesse, but rather reprove them.

HE explaineth, next, the negative part of the former precept, as it was expressed, *ver. 7.* First, by discharging them to be accessory (any of those wayes mentioned, *ver. 7. doct. 3.*) to the sins of wicked men, called here *works of darknesse*, because they flow usually from the darknesse of ignorance, *Act. 3. 17.* and are the works of unrenewed men, who are nothing but darknesse, (See *ver. 8.*) are contrary to the light of Gods revealed will, *Job. 3. 20.* and are usually committed in the dark, the very actors being ashamed to do them openly, *1 Thess. 5. 7.* and because they bring those, who live and die in them without repentance, unto utter darknesse, *Matth. 25. 30.* They are also called *unfruit-
full*

full works; because they not only bring no advantage unto those who do commit them, *Rom. 6. 21.* but also much hurt and dammage, even the wages of sin, which is death, *Rom. 6. 23.* Next, by commanding them to reprove convincingly those works of darknesse, and the parties guilty of them, and this, though chiefly by their contrary good works, *Heb. 11. 7.* yet not only by those, but also by the word of admonition and reproof, *Eccles. 7. 5.* as occasion should offer, and Gods glory with the edification of their neighbour should seem unto spiritual prudence to call for it. Besides what is already observed from a parallel place, ver. 7. doct. 1. hence *Learn, 1.* Then do we make an approved search and enquiry into what is acceptable unto the Lord, when we do not satisfie our selves with the naked knowledge of what He approveth, *Rom. 2. 18.* nor yet do only labour to defend by force of reason, or sufferings, what we find to be truth after search against gain-sayers, *1 Cor. 13. 2, 3.* but do also make it the rule of practice, by practising or forbearing accordingly: for, the Apostle, having commanded them, ver. 10. *to prove what is acceptable unto the Lord,* doth here enjoin them to abstain from that which they could not but by searching find to be displeasing to Him, while he saith, *and have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darknesse.* 2. Though we are not simply, and in all cases to abstain from the fellowship of wicked men, but may freely converse with such of them, as we are bound unto, either by the law of necessity, *Psal. 120. 5, 6.* or by any civil, (*1 Pet. 2. 18.*) religious, (*1 Cor. 7. 12.*) or natural bond, *Eph. 6. 1, 2.* yet not of that kind doth give us warrant to partake with them in their sins; and therefore we are to eschew all unnecessary and voluntary fellowship and familiarity with them, *Psal. 26. 4.* lest thereby we be drawn to walk in their wayes, *Prov. 22. 24, 25.* and they be hardened in their evil course, and kept from being ashamed, *2 Theff. 3. 14.* for, he forbiddeth absolutely all fellowship with them in their sins, and consequently whatever may bring

us under that hazard, if so it can be eschewed, without the neglect of any other duty ; *And have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darknesse.* 3. We ought to look upon sin in its blackest colours of shame, disgrace, losse of our time, strength, and of all other expence consumed upon it, together with the dammage both here, and hereafter, which followeth upon it, and lay aside the consideration of those pleasant deceitfull baits, which Satan doth busk it with to make it more taking ; that so we may be the more deterred from it : for, *Paul* giveth sin a name implying all those and much more, that the very name given to it may scare them from it, while he calleth it *the unfruitfull works of darknesse.* 4. Though the command enjoining to reprove the sins of others, be an affirmative precept ; and therefore not binding unto all, with relation to all persons, at all times, and in all cases, and Christ Himself forbiddeth to cast the pearl of precious reproof before dogs or swine, *Matth. 7. 6.* that is, such who mock the word of admonition, or prove more enraged by it, whom we are to reprove, not so much by conversing with them, or by speaking to them, as by fleeing from them ; yet as to others, our not reproving of their sin, when occasion offereth, and Gods glory with their edification seemeth to call for it, is a sinfull partaking with them in their sin : for, having discharged them to have fellowship with the works of darknesse, he subjoyneth, *but rather reprove them,* implying, that otherwise they would have fellowship with them. 5. Though this duty of labouring to reclaim others from sin by convincing reproofs, whether in words, or in the contrary work, ought mainly to be discharged unto such as have nearest relation to us, *Eph. 6. -4.* or whom we have a more speciall charge of, *1 Thess. 5. 12.* or whom we are most intimate with in spirituall bonds and fellowship, *1 Thessal. 5. 14.* yet we are not to neglect this duty towards others, who stand not under such near relations to us, no not to those, concerning whom we have strong grounds to

to fear that they are yet unrenewed, and enemies in their hearts to Jesus Christ, so long, at least, as all hopes of prevailing with them by that mean are not cut off, 1 Cor. 7. 16. for, he commandeth them here to reprove the sins even of unrenewed Pagans, called therefore *the unfruitfull works of darknesse*; but rather reprove them, saith he.

Verſ. 12. *For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.*

HE doth now confirm the precept thus explained; and, first, he inforceth the dissuasive, *from having fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darknesse*, by an argument taken from the abominable filthinesse of those sins which the wicked Pagans committed in secret, that they might eschew publick shame, which was such, that it was a shame even to speak of them, or to hear them spoken of, leaving them to gather, it was much more shamefull to act them, or to be any wayes accessory unto the acting of them. Doct. 1. There should be such an holy bashfulness in converted Christians, as to think shame in speech to utter, at least without detestation, those things, which godlesse sinners are not so much ashamed to practise: and especially Ministers in their publick preachings would be very modest and sparing in the deciphering of filthy sins, lest they thereby defile their own tongues, offend the ears of some, and do teach others how to commit that sin, which they pretend to reprove: for, Paul giveth this as a reason not only why they should not communicate with the unfruitfull works of darknesse, but also why he did not make expresse mention of those works in particular; *for it is a shame even to speak of those things*, saith he. 2. As all conscience of right and wrong, together with fear and shame following upon doing wrong, be not fully extinct in the unrenewed man; So those small remainders, are not effectually to restrain them from what is wrong; but being over-powered with prevalent Atheism, do give them full liberty to act abominable wickednesse, if so they

they can hide it from the eyes of men, without any effectuall restraint from the all-seeing eye of God: for, conscience of the dishonesty, which was in those unfruitfull works of darknesse, made them eschew the eyes of men, but notwithstanding they committed them in secret; for it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. 3. As secrecy and solitarinesse are most obnoxious to foulest tentations, especially to those, which tend to satisfie the lust of uncleannesse, *Gen. 39. 11. 12.* and therefore would be eschewed by all, *1 Thess. 5. 22.* much lesse sought after by any, *Prov. 7. ver. 8, 9. 10.* So when men do not seek the vail of secrecy to cover their sins, but do glory in their shame, and dare with *Absolom*, (*2 Sam. 16. 22.*) commit those sins openly, and before the sun, which very common honesty, and a naturall instinct would seek to cover; it speaketh a man more corrupt than the very grossest of Pagans, who hath put out the very common principles of naturall honesty, and made his own conscience dead and senselesse, so that he knoweth not shame, *Zeph. 3.-5.* for, even the Pagans, whose sin he doth here aggreage, did take the benefit of secrecy to cover their villanies; which are done of them in secret, saith he.

Verf. 13. *But all things that are reprov'd, are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest, is light.*

HE doth, next, enforce the exhortation to reprove those works of darknesse, first, by an argument taken from one excellent use of admonition and reproof, while he sheweth that those secret sins of wicked men, being reprov'd, are by the light, whether of Gods Word in the mouth of the reprov'r, or of his holy life, made manifest in their black and ugly colours, to wit, not so much unto others, as unto the actors and authors of them. See *1 Cor. 14. 24.* Next, by proving that the light of reproof attaineth this end from the nature of light, which is to make all things that are within its reach, manifest

manifest and conspicuous; for, the words in the Originall do read better thus, *for light is that which manifesteth all things.* Doct. 1. The discovery and conviction of sin in its vilenesse, is of necessary and profitable use unto the sinner; as being the first step towards contrition, *Act. 2. 36.* with 37. and consequently to faith in Jesus Christ and repentance unto life, *Act. 2. 37.* with 38. for, he maketh this an excellent use of reproof, and that which should be aimed at by the reprover, even that sin be made manifest in its vilenesse to the sinner; *for all things that are reprov'd, are made manifest.* 2. It is not a naked sight and knowledge that sin is sin, and in some measure shamefull, which is of any great use to the sinner, but a sight of it in its vilest colours, as it is a breach of Gods most holy Law, enmity against the great God, and a bringer down of Gods eternall wrath: for, those heathens had some knowledge of sin, and of the shame was in it, and therefore they did run to secret with it; and yet he speaketh here of a further discovery, and manifestation of it by the light of reproof, which was usefull and necessary; *All things that are reprov'd, are made manifest.* 3. The Lord doth sometimes blesse not only publick preaching, but also the word of reproof in the mouth of private Christians, and the example of their holy life, for making godlesse sinners take occasion thence to reflect upon themselves, and therein, as in a glasse, to see the filthy vilenesse of their beloved sins, and to judge themselves for them; for, he saith, *all things that are reprov'd, are made manifest by the light*, to wit, the light of verball, or reall reproof, held forth, even by private Christians: for, he doth not speak here to Ministers only. 4. The probable good, which God may bring about to the party reprov'd by the means of our reproof, should have more of weight to incite us towards the making conscience of this duty, than the feared inconvenience to our selves, arising from the parties displeasure, should have to scare us from it: for, *Paul will have us to set upon this dutie, because of our neighbour's good*

good, which probably will be brought about by it: *reprove them*, saith he; *For all things that are reprov'd, are made manifest by the light.* 5. As there is no duty, of the successe whereof we use to be more diffident than that of reprovng the sins of others; So there is not any duty, the successe whereof we have better ground to be perswaded of, even than of this, that discovery of sin to the sinners conscience, either to his conversion or further obduration, shall follow upon a timely and well-guided reproof: for, he proveth that this effect shall follow upon reproof as natively as the discovery of things dark and hid doth follow upon light; *for that is light*, saith he, *which discovereth all things.*

Verf. 14. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

HERE is a second argument to enforce the duty of reprovng those unfruitfull works of darknesse, which also confirmeth the former, to wit, that by reprovng them they should be made manifest. The argument is taken from Gods own example, who in His Word doth reprove the world of sin, and thereby conveyeth the light of Jesus Christ unto them, as the Apostle proveth, by shewing what is Gods great work and design through His whole Word, whereof this verse is a short sum, though it seemeth more particularly to relate unto *Isa. 60. ver. 1. 2.* from which this place is thought to be cited, with some variation in the words, but none in the purpose. Which design is threefold: The first branch whereof, is here implied, even to convince all unrenewed men especially, how wofull and dangerous their present case is, and that it is a spirituall sleep and death. 1. *A sleep*, because the carnall man hath all his spirituall senses bound up, *Isa. 43. 8.* having no spirituall fellowship with those who live a new life. *Epbes. 4. 18.* doth dream and fancy that he seeth, heareth, and converseth with them, *Rev. 3. 17.* which he will after find to be
but

but a meer fancy, when his conscience doth rouize him up, *Rom. 7. 9.* neither hath he power over himself, but is exposed as a prey to Satan, or any who mindeth his spirituall hurt, *2 Tim. 2. 26.* for, such is the case of those naturally who are in a naturall sleep. And, secondly, a *death*, because the naturall man hath not only his senses bound up, as in a sleep; but there is no spirituall power or faculty remaining in him to do any thing which is truly good, *Rom. 8. 7.* as a dead man hath no principle of life, or vitall action. The second branch of this great design is here expressed, which is to point out unto all such what is their duty in that case, even to awake and *rise from the dead*, that is, in a word, to turn to God, to break off their sins by repentance, and to set about all the duties of holinesse flowing from the principle of a new life. Which duty is here, and elsewhere, enjoined by God unto dead sinners, not, that it is in their power, *Jer. 13. 23.* but because it is their duty so to do; yea, and such a duty as must be gone about, otherwise they cannot be saved, *Luk. 13. 3.* and because by such exhortations and commands, as by an outward mean, the Spirit of God doth effectually work that in them, which He requireth from them, *Rom. 10. 17.* The third branch of this great design, is to encourage them unto this duty, from the promise of a greater measure of the light of knowledge, holinesse and comfort here (all which are comprehended under the name of *light*. See upon ver. 8.) and of glory hereafter (called also *light*, *Col. 1. 12.*) to be given unto them by Christ upon their so doing. *Doct. 1.* The pains which God doth take upon godlesse sinners, yet in nature, to awake them from the sleep of sin, and to draw them unto Christ, is a strong argument binding us to commiserate the case of such, and from pity towards them to endeavour in our stations to bring them out of that wooll state wherein they are. Our obligation to help them is greater than His, besides that we are bound to work with God, and to further His design: for, he in-

forceth upon them the duty of reprovng those godlesse
 Atheists, in order to their conviction and amendment,
 from Gods example, who doth the like; *Wherefore he*
saith, Awake thou that sleepest.. 2. That God hath ap-
 pointed reproof of sin to be the ordinary mean of
 awakning dead sinners, and of bringing them to Christ,
 and that He maketh use of this mean Himself all alongs
 His Word, in order to this end, should encourage us,
 as we have accesse, in our stations, to make use of that
 mean towards those with whom we converse; as know-
 ing God may, and when He pleaseth, will, blesse the
 mean appointed by Himself, whatever unlikelyhood there
 be otherwise of successe: for, he exciteth them to pra-
 ctise this duty from this, that God maketh use of re-
 proof, as the ordinary mean of bringing souls to Christ;
Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest. 3. Scrip-
 ture doth not consist so much in the formall words, as in
 the sense and meaning of those words: and therefore
 though we cannot keep in memory the very formall
 words of Scripture; yet if we remember the sum of the
 purpose contained in those words, we may make use of
 it, as of the Word of God, whether for confirmation
 of truth, refutation of error, exhortation to duty, or re-
 proof of sin and vice, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. for, the Apostle,
 being to presse this duty of reprovng upon them from
 Scripture, doth not cite the very formall words of Scrip-
 ture, but giveth the generall drift of all Scripture in few
 words, or the sense and meaning of one particular Scrip-
 ture, to wit, of *Isa.* 60. 1, 2. from which this verse
 seemeth to be cited; *Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that*
sleepest. 4. The first Doctrine deduced from ver. 8.
 hath ground here also, in that he doth again minde them
 of their miserable case by nature, not only under the
 similitude of *death* formerly used, chap. 2. 1. but also of
sleeping. 5. Neither can an offer of Christ unto a sinner
 be favoury, nor a command to imbrace this offer get
 entertainment, untill first a discovery be made unto the
 sinner of his sad and miserable case by nature: for, the
 Lord,

Lord, in holding forth the offer of Christ, and commanding them to imbrace it, doth so speak, as he first discovereth the wofull case, wherein they were, by the similitude of sleep and death, while he saith, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.* 6. Our utter inability to help our selves, or to do any thing acceptable to God, contracted by *Adam's* fall, doth not weaken or abolish Gods soveraign right and dominion over us; in so far as, though we be not able to do, yet He may justly require and exact of us to do: for, though they were dead, and consequently unable to help themselves, yet He requireth them to awake and arise: *Awake thou that sleepest, arise from the dead.* 7. Though it be the only power of God, which quickneth dead sinners, and bringeth them from nature unto grace, *Col. 1. 13.* there being no principle of a spirituall life in us by nature, whereby we can quicken our selves; yet the Lord is pleased to work upon us, not as upon senselesse blocks, but as reasonable creatures, by commanding and perswading us to do that which is our duty (though not in our power) to do, and thereby, as a mean, conveying unto the Elect the effectual working of His power, whereby He worketh in them, what He requireth from them: for, He commandeth those who are dead, to arise from the dead, and so maketh them to rise, *Rom. 4. 17. Arise from the dead.* 8. Though the Word of God for the most part be contrived in general precepts, threatenings and promises, without expresse mention of one more than another, except in some general qualifications, to whom each of those in particular belong, *Joh. 3. 16. Gal. 3. 10.* yet, before a sinner be brought to Christ, the Spirit of God doth make particular application of those unto his consciences, as if they were directed unto him by name: And the more a Minister doth labour to reach the consciences of people, by making particular application of general truths unto them, they are in a fairer way of gaining ground upon them, and doing good unto them by what they preach: for, the Apostle,

holding forth a directory unto us, how to walk in order to the gaining of godlesse sinners, from the Lord's example, doth bring him in speaking, as it were, to every one in particular; *Awake thou, arise thou, Christ shall give thee light.* 9. The holding forth of Christs excellency, and of that excellent state of light, joy, comfort, knowledge, which, being once forfeited by *Adam's* fall, is again purchased by Christ, and to which He bringeth all such as do come unto Him, is one of the strongest arguments (though others also must be made use of, *Luke* 13. 3.) to prevail, even with natural hearts to make them willing in the day of Gods power, and obedient to Him when He doth call them: for, *Paul* sheweth, that even God Himself doth make choice of this argument; *Arise—and Christ shall give thee light.*

Verf. 15. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

HERE is a new precept, the third in order of those which are contained in this Chapter, and it is deduced also as a conclusion from what goeth before, to this purpose, That seeing they were now light in the Lord, ver. 8. and obliged not to have fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darknesse, but to reprove them, ver. 10. therefore they would see to their walk, or take accurate inspection of their life and conversation, whether in word or deed; and to see to their walk, as to be circumspect or precise in it, even willing to go to the outmost (as the word in the original doth signifie) of what every command requireth, both for matter and manner, especially labouring as to approve themselves unto God; so to give no just cause of exception or offence at what we do unto others, no, not to those that are without, who are expressly mentioned, *Col.* 4. 5. where the same precept is in substance proponed: Which precept so proponed, he doth, first, inforce by a reason; for, the particle *as*, doth not alwayes make comparifon, but sometimes rendereth

dereth a reason: and the reason is, that true wisdom doth consist in walking thus, and to walk otherwayes is extream folly. *Doct. 1.* The more of light and knowledge a man hath received from God, he ought to take the more diligent heed, that in all things he practise according to his light; seing not only the way of such is most eyed by wicked men, who watch for his halting, *Jer. 20. 10.* but also, if he doth not walk the more circumspectly, he deserveth double stripes, *Luke 12. 47.* for, this exhortation may be looked on as an inference from what he saith, ver. 8. *ye are now light in the Lord*—See then that ye walk circumspectly, saith he. 2. So many are the wayes, by which we may become accessory to other folks sins, (See ver. 7. doct. 3.) and so many are the snares, which Satan and his instruments do lay in our way to intrap us, *Eph. 6. 11.* that, if we walk not all the more circumspectly, we cannot eschew but we must partake one way or other with wicked men in their sins: for, this exhortation may be looked upon also, as an inference from what he said, ver. 11. *Have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darknesse*—See then that ye walk circumspectly, saith he. 3. Those only are most fit to reprove sin in others to some good purpose, who walk most circumspectly, and live so, as they cannot be justly blamed themselves: Even the very righteous walking of such, is a forcible reproof of sin in others, though they speak nothing, *Heb. 11. 5.* and otherwise their speaking will have no force, *Matth. 7. 3, 4.* besides that God doth usually blesse the pains of such, *Prov. 10. 21.* for, this exhortation may be also looked upon, as an inference from what he said, ver. 11. *but rather reprove them*—See then that ye walk circumspectly. 4. That a man may walk accurately and circumspectly, coming up (so far as through grace he is able) to the outmost of what every command requireth, both for matter and manner, it is necessary that he walk, not rashly and indeliberately, but, that he see and diligently consider antecedently to his acting, to wit, not only what he is to

do, that it be neither evil nor appearance of evil, *1 Thess. 5. 22.* nor an occasion leading to evil, *Rom. 13. 14.* but also from what principle and fountain, (*Matth. 7. 17, 18.*) for what end, (*Matth. 6. 2, 5.*) and by what means, (*Job 13. 7, 8.*) he intendeth to act in every thing which he is about to do: for, in order to their circumspect walking, he requireth of them that they should see, the word signifieth *to take heed, to see with attention, and diligently to consider. Matth. 7. 3. See then that ye walk circumspectly. 5.* As those are only truly wise in Gods account, whatever the world think of them, who labour to walk most exactly by the rule of Gods Word all alongs their christian course; So where this true and sanctified wisdom (which cometh from above) is, it will render it self evident, by making the person endued with it, walk circumspectly, so that he will foresee the evil of a course, and eschew it, *Prov. 22. 3. search out the mind of God in every thing, understand it (Hos. 14. 9.) and observe it, Psal. 107. 43. keep silence when he should not speak, Prov. 10. 19. speak advisedly, and the truth only, when he speaketh, Prov. 16. 23. hear the voice of the rod, and take with reproof and correction, Prov. 17. 10. be loath to stumble any with whom he conuerseth, Col. 4. 5. yea, and will labour to gain them to God, Prov. 11. - 30. for, he maketh true wisdom to consist in, and to evidence it self by, walking circumspectly; Not as fools, but as wise.*

6. The lesse circumspect and exact men be in walking by the rule of Gods Word, the greater fools they are in Gods esteem (whatever the world do think of them) as being not only destitute of all the fore-mentioned evidences of true wisdom, but having also the contrary evidences of extream folly; *See ye walk circumspectly, not as fools.*

Verf. 16. *Redeeming the time, because the dayes are evil.*

THE Apostle doth, next, amplifie and illustrate the former precept, by pointing out one thing, wherein this accurate and wise walking doth mainly consist, which he doth therefore exhort them unto, even that they would *redeem the time*, that is, close with, and make use of every opportunity and fit occasion of doing good (for, the word, rendred *time*, doth properly signifie that nick of time, which is fit and opportune for doing any thing, *Gal. 6. 10.*) and to use it with more than ordinary diligence, yea, and with the losse of their own pleasures, ease and worldly profit, and so in a manner regain the time formerly lost by negligence, while they should do as much in the present time, as they might have done both in that, and in the time formerly mis-spent, if they had used but ordinary diligence: Even as merchants, from whom the word renderd *redeem* is taken, who use to buy their commodities while the fit time of buying lasteth, and having haply had great losses, or formerly spent their time idely or unthriftilly, do dispense with their own pleasures and ease, and by their more than ordinary diligence, seek to redeem, and, as it were, to buy back again the time which is lost. Which duty of redeeming time he doth inforce upon them, from the evil of the present times through the wickedness of men, and those manifold troubles in the times, which were hanging over the Churches head, and whereby all opportunity of doing good might in a short time be taken from them, or they from it. See *Eccles. 11. 2. Job. 9. 4. Psal. 1.* As there are some times and seasons more fit and opportune than others, for doing some pieces of service to God, and of our duty to men; So a great part of spiritual wisdom and accurate walking, doth consist in diligent and timeous going about of such duties, as God doth call-for at that time: and they, who for love to their ease, profit, pleasure and credit, do mispend their time, and neglect

that good one thing, which God's glory and their own salvation do call-for to be gone about in the seasonable time, are but inconsiderate fools: for, he sheweth, that circumspect, wise walking consisteth in this, even in *redeeming the time*. 2. As we are naturally prodigall and lavish in mispending of time; So it is no small part of divine wisdom to regain, as it were, mispent time by double diligence; and to buy it back again, so far as is possible, by breaking off our ease, our sleep, and weaning our selves from our ordinary and allowed recreations at other times: for, this command to *redeem the time*, doth speak so much. 3. So far should we be from complying with the evils of the times, for eschewing the hatred, and gaining the favour of wicked men in the time, *Hos. 5. 10, 11.* that the abounding of sin and wickednesse in the time, should make us so much the more conscientious and diligent in a profitable spending of the time, and in accurate and circumspect walking, by keeping at a great distance from any thing that is sinfull in the time, *Rev. 3. 4.* as knowing not only that such evil times do threaten to remove all opportunity of doing good from us, or us from it, *Eccles. 11. 2.* but also that they carry alongs with them many tentations from evil example, from straits, from persecutions, *Matth. 24. 24.* which calleth for greater circumspectnesse: besides, that the dishonour which God getteth from many in such times, should make us honour him the more, *Psal. 119. 136.* for, he maketh the evils of the times a motive, not only to redeem the time, but also to walk circumspectly; *For the dayes are evil.* 4. Times cannot be so evil, but Gods children may, and will improve, even the evil of those times for Gods honour and their own spirituall advantage: yea, and the worse that times are, in some respects they find a way to improve them the more for those ends: for, *Paul* maketh the evil of those times a spur to incite the Godly unto their duty, while he saith, *Redeeming the time, for the dayes are evil.*

Verſ. 17. *Wherefore be ye not unwiſe, but underſtanding what the will of the Lord is.*

IN the third place he inferreth a concluſion from the evil of thoſe times, containing a further amplification of the precept given, ver. 15. from the rule of, or the mean enabling us to, this circumſpect walking, ſet down both negatively and affirmatively, to wit, that, ſeing the time was evil and full of ſnares, they would not be unwiſe, or without underſtanding in the point of duty, either for the matter or manner of it; but would acquaint themſelves with God's will revealed in His Word, whereby they might be directed in relation to all duties, dangers, ſnares, tentations and caſes. *Doct.*

1. The great thing to be aimed at in ſeeking knowledge and underſtanding, is not that we may only know, or be able to jangle about queſtions, or that we may be known or eſteemed of for our knowledge; but that we may praſtiſe, and walk circumſpectly, according to what is made known unto us: for, he would have them underſtanding; and knowing God's will, for this end, that they may walk circumſpectly in thoſe evil dayes, as is clear from the illative particle *wherefore*: *Wherefore be ye not unwiſe, but underſtanding*, &c. 2. No mother-wit, naturall philoſophie, or carnall wiſdom is a ſufficient rule to walk by in a way acceptable to God, or to convey us ſafely through thoſe rocks and ſnares, which are ſpread for our feet in evil times, 1 *Cor.* 1. 20, 21. and 2. 14. It is only the knowledge revealed in His Word, which is able to reach this end, as containing in it a moſt perfect rule both of faith and manners, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16, 17. for, he would have them, in order to this end, *underſtanding what the will of the Lord is.* 3. There is that in God's will revealed in Scripture, and in no other writings elſe, which is ſufficient to make a man compleatly wiſe unto ſalvation, and to drive away thoſe dark clouds of ignorance and folly, which are in the ſpirit of every man

man by nature ; there being no other science, or knowledge, which can give a through discovery, either of our lost estate by nature, or of the way of our delivery from it by a Redeemer, nor yet of that obedience in its full extent, wherein our thankfulness for a delivery consisteth : for, he opposeth those two, *Be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.* 4. As it ought to be a Christian man's study to know the will of God revealed in Scripture ; So this is a subject, which never will be perfectly known ; there being alwayes some new thing to be learned of it and from it, even by those who are greatest proficientes in the knowledge of it, *Psal.* 119. 96. and therefore we must be still schollers at this school : for, *Paul* setteth forth their studying to know this subject, by a word of the present time, implying it would be a continued lasting work, while he saith, *understanding what the will of God is.*

Verf. 18. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess: but be filled with the Spirit:

IN this verse are other two of those precepts, which do belong to all Christians in generall, first, that they *be not drunk with wine* : where by *wine* is meant all drink, which maketh drunk, set forth in one of its kinds, which is most generally known. And the Apostles scope is not to forbid all use of wine ; seing it may be lawfully used (as all other good creatures of God, *1 Tim.* 4. 4.) for health, *1 Tim.* 5. 23. for satisfying thirst, *Rom.* 12. 20. as also for a Christian and sober chearing up the naturall and vitall spirits upon some singular occasion, *Job.* 2. 8. *Prov.* 31. 6. but he condemneth all excessive and inordinate use of wine, when more of it is taken than either natural necessity calleth-for, or Christian sober recreation and chearfulness doth allow, and so much as our bodies and spirits are thereby overcharged in some measure, lesse or more, and so rendered unfit for God's service, *Luk.* 21. 34: even although the
use

use of naturall reason be not taken away by it, *Iſa.* 5. 22. This diſſwafive from drunkenneſſe is enforced from the ſad concomitant and conſequence of this ſin, called here *exceſſe*. The word ſignifieth lavish waſting, and deſtruction; which waſting deſtruction is extended elſewhere to the drunkards means, (*Prov.* 23. 21.) his reputation and credit, (*Hab.* 2. 16.) his natural ſtrength of body (*Prov.* 23. 29.) his wit and judgement, (*Hof.* 4. 11.) yea, and to his ſoul for ever without repentance, *1 Cor.* 8. 10. So that this one word hath a comprehensive ſum of all thoſe dreadfull conſequences, which do accompany this one ſin. Secondly, in oppoſition to their being drunk with wine, he exhorteth them to be filled with the Spirit of God, to wit, by labouring to have the fruits of the Spirit in all goodneſſe, rightcouſneſſe and truth, with joy, peace, and the comfortable ſenſe of His preſence abounding in them in a rich and copious meaſure. *Doct.* 1. Chriſtians, as in all other things, ſo in their eating and drinking muſt be ruled by the Word, and neither by their own appetite, *Prov.* 23. 1, 2. nor the pleaſure of others, *Hof.* 7. 5. for, he preſcribeth a rule for their drinking; *Be not drunk with wine*, ſaith he. 2. So pernicious; and perverſe is our naturall corruption, that thoſe things, which God hath given to man for his help and good, are perverted by it, for bringing about his hurt; both in ſoul and body, and outward eſtate: for, *wine*, which is given for health and glading the heart of man, (*Pſal.* 104. 15.) is abuſed to drunkenneſſe, and conſequently to God's diſhonour, and the man's own prejudice: ſo much is ſuppoſed, while he ſaith, *Be not drunk with wine*. 3. There is no ſin more inconfiſtent with wiſe, circumspect and conſcientious ſpending of time, than the ſin of immoderate drinking is. Experience ſheweth it conſumeth time, caſteth open doors to all wickedneſſe; burieth ſhame, which keepeth many from vice; and transformeth a man to a very beaſt, ſo that he neither knoweth nor careth what he doth; it is the mother of ſtrifes and luſt; driveth to ſtealing, lying,

ing, swearing, and what not? for, in opposition to the duty of walking circumspectly and redeeming the time, he mentioneth this sin of drunkennesse and forbiddeth it; *And be not drunk with wine*, saith he. 4. Such is the tyrannie of this sin, that where it is once given way to, it carrieth a man headlongs in the service of it, so that he valueth no losse, whether of credit, means, body, or soul, if he may get his beastly appetite satisfied: for, *Paul* supponeth many were given to this sin, though therein was *excesse*, or destruction, and losse of all the forementioned good things following upon it, while he saith, *wherein, or in which being drunk, or in which drunkenness there is excess*, or losse and destruction. 5. Though a gracious person may through infirmity slip into this sin of drunkennesse, *Gen.* 19. 32, 33. yet a drunken course of life cannot consist with a mans having the spirit of grace in any plentifull measure; seing He is a spirit of temperance, chastity and moderation, *Gal.* 5. 23. and not of excesse: for, the aduerbative particle *but*, implyeth an opposition betwixt those two, drunkennesse, and enjoying the presence of the Spirit of God; *Be not drunk with wine--but be filled with the Spirit*. 6. We ought not to rest upon, and content our selves with, a small measure of the graces of Gods Spirit, but are to endeavour to be filled with them, and to have the Spirit of God dwelling richly in us, by actuating all our graces, *Cant.* 4. 16. and adding one degree of grace unto another; *2 Pet.* 3. 18. for, he commandeth them not only to have, but to *be filled with the Spirit*. 7. What even fleshly sinfull pleasure a man doth find, or imagineth to find from any sinfull course, the same, and much more is to be had in a spirituall and divine manner in the way of grace: and particularly, a copious plentifull measure of the spirit of grace doth work the like effects spiritually, which wine immoderately taken doth bodily; It filleth the soul with joy and gladnesse, *Psal.* 4. 7. It maketh a man forget his former miseries, *Job* 11. 16. it enlargeth his heart, louseth his tongue, and maketh him

him eloquent in setting forth the Lords praises, *Luk. 1. 67. 68.* for, he recommendeth unto them to *be filled with the spirit*, as a remedy against their filling themselves with wine, and calleth the one a filling, or ebriety and drunkennesse, to wit, in a spiritual sense, as well as the other, in a bodily sense, because of the likenesse of effects betwixt them.

Verf. 19, *Speaking to your selves in Psalms, and Hymnes, and spirituall songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*

THis last precept is illustrated, and the duty enjoined thereby recommended from two things, wherein this fill of the spirit, and of spirituall joy flowing from it, should and will vent it self, which he proponeth also in way of precept. His scope wherein mainly, is, to teach them, and us in them, how we ought to carry our selves in our times of mirth and gladnesse. The first of those two things is in this verse, to wit, melodious and artificiall singing of praises unto God: where he expresseth, first, the act of singing in three words, *speaking, singing, and making melody*. By all which is meained an intelligible, artificiall, and melodious tuning of the voice, together with an answerable orderly motion of the understanding and affections within, going along with the matter which is sung. Secondly, An inferior, and subordinate end to be aimed at in singing, even our mutuall edification, while he saith, *Speaking to your selves*, or, *one to another*: for, it is the same word, which is chap. 4. 32. and *Col. 3. 16.* Thirdly, He expresseth the matter to be sung, in three words, the very titles which are given to *David's Psalms*, and other scriptural Songs: and though there be some difference among Interpreters about the kind of Songs, which are expressed by every one of those in particular; yet the most received and probable opinion is, that by *Psalms* are meained all holy Songs in generall of whatsoever argument, whether they

they contain prayers, praises, complaints, deprecations, prophesie, history, or a purpose mixt of all those; and by *Hymnes* are meant speciall songs of praise to God; and by *songs*, a certain kind of Hymnes, expressing the praises of God for some of His noble acts, great and wonderfull beyond others. And those *Songs* he calleth *spirituall* (which epithet is to be extended to the Psalms and Hymnes also) as being framed by the Spirit of God, containing spirituall and heavenly purpose, and requiring the assistance of God's Spirit and a spiritual frame of heart for singing them aright; and this in opposition to the obscene, filthy, and fleshly songs of carnall men and drunkards. And fourthly, he sheweth the chief thing to be made use of, and employed as an instrument in singing, to wit, not so much the lips, tongue, and outward voice, (though those be also necessary in singing, *Act. 16. 25.*) as the heart, which then is made use of in singing, when our heart goeth along with the voice, so, as we understand (*1 Cor. 14. 15.*) and be intent upon the purpose, (*Psal. 57. 7.*) and our affections be stirred and suitably affected with it, *Psal. 98. 4.* And lastly, he sheweth the great end, to which all our songs ought to be directed, even to the Lord; the glorifying, and praising of Him, being not only the remote scope of singing, as it is of all other ordinances, and ought to be of all our actions, *1 Cor. 10. 31.* but its proper and immediate scope; so that the heart in singing ought to be actually taken up with the thoughts of praise to God, arising from the consideration of the purpose which we sing. Besides what I have already observed upon a parallel place, *Col. 3. 16.* Learn hence, 1. The duty of singing Psalms and spirituall Songs, is not astricted and limited to only one in the Congregation, or to some certain orders of men, the rest being silent, but is enjoined to all the Lords people, even all the members of the Church: for, *Paul* maketh the command to sing, of equal extent with that other of being filled with the spirit, ver. 18. *Speaking to your selves in Psalms and Hymnes, &c.* saith he. 2. That we

we may go about this worship of singing praises to God acceptably, it is necessary, that we be filled with the Spirit and have a rich and copious measure of His presence and assistance, though not to compose new songs : for, he pointeth at scripturall Songs, as the most fitting purpose to be sung, under the titles of *Psalms, Hymnes, and spirituall songs* ; yet that we may be enabled to chooſe the fittest songs for the present occasion, and sing them with such a spirituall, elevated frame of heart, as such a divine and heavenly piece of worship requireth ; for he saith, *be filled with the spirit, speaking to your selves in Psalms, and Hymnes, and spiritual songs.* 3. As even the children of God, when they have gotten a full draught of joy, peace, and other sweet fruits of the Spirit of God, are not above the hazard of venting their joy, by falling out in fits of carnall lightnesse ; So there is nothing, which the childe of God ought more to advert unto, than how to carry aright when his cup is full according to his hearts wish : and in order hereto, would expresse his joy in the praises of God ; lest by doing otherwise, and giving way to lightnesse of carriage or expressions, in that case he provoke the Spirit of God to withdraw from him, *Eph. 4. 30.* for, therefore doth he command them being filled with the Spirit to vent their joy, by *speaking to one another in Psalms, and Hymnes, and spiritual songs.* 4. As the Lord hath provided Songs and Psalms to be sung by us of diverse arguments, containing purpose suitable for every condition we can readily fall under ; So we ought to make such use of that variety, as to make choice of those Psalms for our present singing, which are most fit for the present occasion : for, as is said, the titles here given, do relate to the severall purposes, which are set forth in spiritual songs ; all of which are to be sung, as God by His present dealing with His Church, or our selves shall require ; *Speaking in Psalms, and Hymnes, and spirituall songs.* 5. In singing of Psalms to God, there must be an inward harmony, and musically melody in the soul and heart, as well as in the tongue :

tongue: yea, the chief melody which soundeth most sweetly unto God, is that of the soul and heart; and therefore the outward delighting ~~of~~ the ears is to be taken no further notice of, than it serveth to make the purpose we sing, work the more effectually upon the heart: for, he saith, *singing and making melody in the heart*: what this melody of the heart is, was shown in the exposition.

Verf. 20. Giving thanks alwayes for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

HERE is the second thing, wherein our being filled with the Spirit, should, and will vent it self, even in giving of thanks, or in a sensible acknowledgement of favours received, and in expressing our sense of them, whether by word or work to the praise of the bestower. Which duty is amplified, 1. from the time, when it ought to be discharged, *alwayes*, and at all times: not as if we were to be alwayes, and without intermission in the actuall exercise of this duty of formall and direct thanksgiving; (seeing there are other necessary duties which sometimes must divert us from it) but because our whole life ought to be according to the will of God, and consequently a reall expression of our thankfulness to Him; and because we are not to omit any occasion, when it offereth, of formal and direct thanksgiving to God expressed in words, flowing from the inward sense and feeling of our hearts, as they are said to do a thing *alwayes*, who do it upon all due occasions. See 2 *Sam.* 9. 13: Secondly, from the matter, for which we are to give thanks, *for all things*, whether spirituall or temporall, prosperous or adverse; for, God maketh all things, even those which are adverse, work together for the good of such as love Him, *Rom.* 8. 28. yea, He punisheth lesse than our iniquities deserve, *Ezra* 9. 13. and maketh saddest corrections to afford most necessary and profitable instructions, *Psal.* 94. 12. and 119. 71.

so that there is ground of thanksgiving, even for those. Thirdly, from the party to whom this duty is to be discharged, *unto God and the Father*. See upon Col. 3. ver. 17. doct. 3. And, fourthly, from the party through whom, *Jesus Christ*, by the vertue of whose merit and satisfaction (which are His name whereby He is known) we are not only inabled to go about our duty, *Philip. 4. 13.* but also all our spiritual performances, whether of prayer or thanksgiving, are acceptable and well-pleasing unto God, *Eph. 1. 6.* Doct. 1. The more a man doth find his heart disposed to give thanks to God at all times, and for all things, even for those things wherein divine dispensation goeth crosse to his own affections, he may the more certainly conclude that he hath the saving work of Gods Spirit in him in a copious measure; and the more apt we are to mistake, repine and murmur at Gods dealing, and so to waist our spirits in heartlesse complaints, there is the lesse evidence of a gracious work of Gods Spirit in us, at least in any great measure: for, he maketh *giving of thanks alwayes for all things*, an effect of being filled with the Spirit. 2. So firm, so calm and composed is that man's state and inward frame of heart, who hath his soul replenished with a rich measure of the saving work of Gods Spirit, that nothing can fall out so crosse unto him, but, he may see the hand of God working for good to him in it, and consequently be kept in perfect peace, and a joyful frame of heart, expressing it self in giving of thanks to God, notwithstanding of it, yea and for it: for, he sheweth, the man filled with the Spirit, may attain to this fixed frame of heart, even to be *giving thanks alwayes for all things unto God*. 3. Spiritual exercises, especially that of giving thanks, are such, that, being rightly gone about, frequency in them doth not beget satiety and loathing, but rather a greater delight to continue in them; so that the more we are acquainted with them, the more we love them: for, otherwise this command of *giving thanks alwayes*, should never receive obedience. 4. So steadable and usefull is a

cheery and thankful frame of heart unto a Christian, that it bringeth meat out of the eater, encouragement from matter of discouragement, and taketh occasion to lift it self up in the praises of God, even from these things which are matter of down-casting and heartlesse drouping unto others: for, a thankful heart will give thanks *always and for all things*, even for adverse and crosse dispensations.

3. Though we are bound to give thanks unto men for favours received, as unto instruments of Gods good providence towards us, *Col. 3. 15.* yet, religious thanksgiving is only due unto God, as implying an eying of Him to whom we give thanks, as the supreme fountain and author of the favour received, having sufficiency in Himself, and receiving nothing from any other, *1 Chron. 29. 14.* and implying also a religious subjection of the whole man, both in soul and body, unto his benefactor, in evidence of a thankfull heart, *1 Cor. 6. 20.* for, the Apostle, speaking of this religious thanksgiving, will have it ascribed to God only; *Giving thanks unto God and the Father.* 6. That we may imploy Jesus Christ aright, whether for furniture and through-bearing in duty, or for acceptance of our performances by God, it is most conducing and necessary that we so take Him up, as He is made known by the Word in His Person, Nature and Offices, and accordingly close with Him by faith, as ours, whereby, our faith being acted in Him with relation to our state and persons, upon undoubted grounds, we may find more easie work to act faith in Him for furniture to such a particular duty, or for acceptance to it when it is performed: for, *Paul* seemeth to imply so much, while, teaching them to act faith in Christ for through-bearing and acceptance in this duty of thanksgiving, he doth hold Him forth not only under His titles of *Lord* and *Jesus* and *Christ*, which do imply His distinct Natures, with the unity of His Person, and His threefold Office, to which He was anointed, (See upon chap. 1. ver. 17. doct. 6.) but also maketh mention of His *Name*, which expresseth what-

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ever other thing is revealed of Him, and whereby especially He is made known; and withall appropriateth Christ unto himself, teaching them to do the like upon grounds of knowledge of what He is, while he saith, *in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Verf. 21. *Submitting your selves one to another in the fear of God.*

THE Apostle (having from chap. 4. ver. 1. exhorted unto such duties, as belong to all Christians in general, of whatsoever rank or station) doth now, in the second part of this Chapter, exhort to those duties which belong to Christians, as they are members of families. And, first, in this verse to make way from the former purpose to that which followeth, he doth premit a general exhortation unto all, whether superiors or inferiors, to be mutually *subject one to another*: where, submission, or subjection, is taken; not strictly for that which is the root of obedience in inferiors towards superiors, as ver. 22. but generally, for that service of love which every one oweth to another for their mutuall good and advantage in their severall stations. See upon Gal. 5. ver. 13. And it is called submission to our neighbour; because it is not sufficient that we simply do the commanded dutie unto him, except our so doing flow from a principle of love to him, and that we actually intend therein his good and advantage; and because it must be done with condescendency of spirit and stooping, seeing our proud and lofty spirits do look upon every duty towards our neighbour, as below them. And he addeth *in the fear of God*: which containeth 1. a motive to the duty, this mutuall submission and stooping unto all those duties, which we owe one to another, being an evidence of a man's fearing God; Gen. 42. 18. and, 2. the right fountain, from whence this submission should flow; for, then do we our duty towards others acceptably, and as we ought, when our so doing floweth from

the fear and awe of God, *Col. 3. - 22.* and, 3. the rule and measure of this submission, there being none bound to submit himself to please his neighbour further than is consisting with that subjection and obedience which he oweth unto God, *Act. 5. 29. Doct. 1.* We are not, under pretence of going about the duties of Gods immediate worship, to neglect those other duties of our particular callings, and which we owe to man in our several stations: God alloweth time for both, we are to take time for both; and conscientious regard of the one and of the other, are most consistent: for, the Apostle enjoyneth both the former, and latter sort of duties, as it were with one breath, which is clear from the grammatical construction of the words; *Giving thanks alwayes -- submitting your selves one to another.* Yea, secondly, The conscientious discharging of those duties which we owe to our neighbour in our several stations, in a way acceptable to God, doth call for, and argue a copious measure of, the saving work of Gods Spirit in the heart no lesse than those other duties of Gods worship and service: for, this verse dependeth upon, and is constructed with ver. 18. *Be filled with the Spirit -- submitting your selves.* 3. There are none living, whom God alloweth to live only to themselves; but all are bound to lay out themselves in their respective employments for the good and behoof of others; even superiors for the good of inferiors: for, this command is given to all without exception; *Submitting your selves one to another.* 4. As God hath tyed us not to live to our selves only, but also to others, whose good we are to aim at in our place and station; So, for a recompence, and that there may be a kind of equality, He hath tyed those others to live also unto us, and one way or other to be forth-coming for our good and advantage: for, the command and obligation founded upon it, is reciprocal; *Submitting your selves one to another.* 5. Where the fear of God is rooted in the heart, it will make a man conscientiously carefull and tender of his duty towards man, so that he will not only

only do his duty, but also do it from a right principle and motive, and so do as he will not overdo, by displeasing God, while he goeth about to please men: for, he holdeth forth the fear of God, as the fountain, motive and rule of that submission which is here enjoyed; *Submitting one to another in the fear of God.*

Verſ. 22. *Wives, submit your selves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.*

THE Apostle cometh now to presse those particular duties, which are incumbent to every member of a compleet Family. And, being to begin with the duties of husbands and wives, he doth in the first place exhort wives to their dutie. to wit, that part of it, which is peculiar to them, passing-by those other duties which are common to them with their husbands, as love; (*Tit. 2. 4. Col. 3. 19.*) communion of body and goods, (*1 Cor. 7. 4.*) dwelling together, (*1 Pet. 3. 7.*) bearing mutually with one anothers infirmities, *Gal. 6. 2.* These duties then peculiar to the wives, are here briefly summed up in this one word of *submission*, properly and strictly so called: and it supposeth somewhat in the wife, to wit, a reverend esteem of her husband, as the root of this submission, spoken of, ver. 33. to be evidenced in her respective speaking to him, and of him, *1 Pet. 3. 6.* and it expresseth somewhat, to wit, the obedience of the wife to her husband in things lawfull, flowing from reverence and submission of mind, *1 Pet. 3. 5, 6.* It implyeth also somewhat, as consequentia to that state of subjection, wherein the wife is placed, even the exercise of several vertues, as that she be a keeper at home, *Tit. 2. 5.* an active promoter of her husband's and her own affairs, especially within doors, *Prov. 31. 13. &c.* that she evidence shamefastnesse, sobriety and submission in her moderate speech, in her grave and affable deportment, and in rendering her self teachable in those things wherein she shall be instructed by her husband, *1 Tim.*

2. 9, 10, 11, 12. Now, this submission of the wives, is explained, first, from the party to whom they owe it, to wit, their own husbands, even though they should come short of others in knowledge, wisdom, and every other thing, which doth deserve it, 1 *Sam.* 25. 17. And, 2. from the manner, motive and rule of their submissive obedience, while he saith, *as unto the Lord*, to wit, Christ, expressly spoken of, ver. 23. For, 1. It must not be constrained and feigned, but willing and sincere, resembling so far, at least, that subjection which they owe to the Lord Christ: for, though the comparative particle *as*, doth not hold forth an equality in all things; yet it pointeth at a similitude and likeness in some things. 2. It must not flow from a natural principle only of law, custome, or desire of preventing domestick broyles; but from conscience of duty to the Lord Christ, and from respect to His ordinance, who hath so appointed. And, thirdly, it must be only in things lawfull, and no wayes contrary to that submissive obedience, which they owe to Him. *Dock.* 1. As the right ordering of Families doth conduce much to the advancing of Religion and Policy; (combination in Families being the foundation of all other societies) So the good and orderly conversation of husband and wife, is of great concernment for advancing piety and godlinesse among all the other members of the Family: for, as the Apostle presseth much those duties which belong to Christians, as they are members of Families; so he doth begin with the duties of husband and wife. *Wives, submit yourselves.* 2. When we are to deal with persons of several estates and conditions, and to inform and presse upon them their respective duties, we are to begin with the inferiours, rather than the superiours; because their duty, through the subjection which is in it, is more difficile, and being made conscience of, is a strong motive unto the Superiour to go about his dutie in like manner: for therefore the Apostle, in pressing duties upon those three pairs, which are in every compleat Family, doth alwayes begin

begin with the inferiour first, as here, *Wives, submit your selves.* 3. The great and main duty which a wife, as a wife, ought to learn, and so learn as to practise it, is to be subject to her own husband, so that what ever wives be otherwise for parts, for birth, for beauty, for thrift, for breeding, if this be inlaking, they want their chief ornament, are dishonourable to God, and a disgrace to their husbands; for, *Paul* doth hold it forth as their great lesson, and the sum of all their duty; *Wives, submit your selves unto your own husbands.* 4. There is no wife, what ever be her birth, parts, or any other privilege, who is exempted from this ty of subjection to her own husband. The law of nature, God's ordinance, and her own voluntary covenant, do bind her to it; for, he speaketh indefinitely to all wives; *submit your selves.* 5. There is not any husband, to whom this honour of submission from his own wife is not due; no personall infirmity, frowardnesse of nature, no, nor error in the point of Religion doth deprive him of it, *1 Cor. 7. 13.* for, he speaketh indefinitely also of husbands; *Wives, submit your selves unto your own husbands.* 6. A wife can never discharge her duty in any measure of conscientious tenderneſſe towards her husband, except ſhe have an high esteeme of the Lord Christ, and be in the first place subject unto Him; that so from love to Him ſhe may subject her ſelf to her husband, not going without thoſe bounds of submission, which are conſiſtent with her love to Christ: for, while he biddeth *submit themselves unto their husbands; as unto Christ,* he ſuppoſeth they had ſubmitted to Christ already, and ſpeaketh to them as ſuch.

Verſ. 23. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and he is the ſaviour of the body.

I He Apoſtle doth, next, enforce this duty of ſubmiſſive obedience upon wives, from the ordinance of God,
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who hath made the husband to be an head to his wife: which similitude of an *head*, taken from a naturall or politick body, implyeth, first, the husbands eminency by reason of his sex, the woman being the weaker vessel, *1 Pet. 3. -7-* and made for the man (to wit, an helper to him, *Gen. 2. 18.*) and the man not for the wife, *1 Cor. 11. 9.* as the head is more eminent than the body. 2. It implyeth the husbands power and authority of government over his wife, as the head hath power over the body to rule and direct it: in which respect the man is called the image of God in a sense peculiar to himself, which agreeth not to the woman, *1 Cor. 11. 7.* And, it implyeth, thirdly, that ordinarily men are, at least should be, endued with a greater measure of knowledge, prudence and other parts, which they are to employ for the behoof of their wives, *1 Cor. 14. 35.* even as the head is the seat of wisdom, knowledge, nerves and senses, sending down influence for sense and motion to all the members: upon all which grounds, women ought in reason to be subject to their husbands. Which argument he doth illustrate and enforce from the similitude of Christs headship over the Church (whereof see chap. 1. ver. 22.) so that wives ought to submit themselves, because God will have some resemblance of Christs authority over the Church held forth in the husbands authority over the wife. I say, some resemblance only: for, the comparative particle *as*, holdeth forth not an equality, but a similitude and likenesse, and in some things only, betwixt Christs headship over the Church, and the husbands over the wife, even in those things, which I presently shew are implied in the husbands headship, which are some shadows only of that eminency, power and fulnesse of grace and perfections, which are in our head Christ. But besides those, the Apostle doth here expresse one thing, wherein this resemblance doth also hold, to wit, that Christ, as head, is the *Saviour of the body*, thereby implying, that as Christs dominion over the Church, His body, doth tend to, and is exercised in

procuring and bringing about the Churches good and salvation ; So the husbands authority and eminency are given him for the like end , even to procure the good and safety of his wife , in defending her from injuries , (*1 Sam.* 30. 18.) providing for her , (*1 Tim.* 5. 8.) directing her in things necessary , &c. *1 Cor.* 14. 35. and therefore the wife , upon this consideration also , ought to subject her self ; seeing the husbands power and authority over her are given for her good. Besides those doctrines , which the Text thus explained doth expressly hold forth , we may gather these consequences from it , 1. It is not sufficient that wives do subject themselves to their husbands from respect to their own peace , ease , credit , or to any thing of that sort ; but their subjection ought to flow from the conscience of , and respect to that state and dignity wherein God hath placed their husbands above them , so that their personall infirmities do not prevail so much to make them despise them , as the dignity of their state to beget respect , reverence and obedience towards them : for , *Paul* enforceth such a subjection , as floweth from this ground , while he saith , *for the husband is the head of the wife.* 2. There is no society , though never so strictly tied together with strongest bonds , which can comfortably subsist , and keep together for any space of time , except there be different degrees of superiours and inferiours , some to govern , and others to obey in the Lord , among them : for , the wise Lord did see it necessary so to ordain , even in conjugall society of husband and wife , who are so strictly tied , that both are but one flesh , (See ver. 31.) and yet the husband is made *the head of the wife.* 3. Christians ought to be of such an heavenly frame of spirit , as to take occasion from things civil or naturall , which do occur in their ordinary employments , to ascend to heavenly contemplations of things spirituall , which have some resemblance to these other things , which are among their hands : for , the Apostle teacheth so much , while he leadeth husband & wife from the consideration

sideration of the union, order and duties of married parties, to contemplate that sweet union and order, which is betwixt Christ and His Church, both here and in the following verses; *Even as Christ is the head of the Church*, saith he, 4. Husbands, and consequently other Superiours, have a speciall piece of the image of Christ put upon them, in respect of their power and authority over their inferiours given them of God; whereby both inferiours may be afraid to vilifie and contemn their authority, lest they be therein found defacers of the image of God, and they themselves also may be taught to resemble Christ, whose image they bear, in employing their state and dignity, so as they walk answerably to it, if they would have that submission and respect from inferiours which is due unto it: for, *Paul* maketh that eminency and authority, which husbands have over their wives, a shadow and resemblance of Christs power over His Church; *even as Christ is the head of the Church*, 5. As the members of Christs body are by nature lost and gone, even dead in sin and children of wrath, *Eph. 2. 1. - 3.* So there was no way for their recovery, but by Jesus Christ His becoming man, and suffering death, and uniting Himself, being now risen from death, unto them as their head, that so He may bestow the influences of spirituall life, with a right to heaven upon them, here, and at last take them to Himself in glory hereafter: for, he sheweth that Christ is become the *Churches head*, that He might be a *Saviour of his lost body*. 6. The dominion and power which husbands have over their wives, is not tyrannicall, rigid, or soveraign, but loving, gentle, warm and amiable, and such as the wife may look upon as a mercy to her self, as well as a dignity unto her husband; for, it is compared here unto that sweet and naturall power which the head exerciseth over the body, and Christ over His Church, who maketh His people willing in the day of His power; and it ought to be employed wholly for the good and safety of his wife, as Christ is the *Saviour of the body*.

Vers.

Verf. 24. *Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.*

THE Apostle, secondly, repeateth the exhortation, as a conclusion from the former argument, that wives should subject themselves unto their own husbands; and addeth two things, 1. The manner of this subjection, to wit, such, as it may resemble the subjection of the Church unto Christ: which is to be understood, not in all things; (for wives are not to subject their souls and consciences to their husbands, as Believers do to Christ, trusting in Him for life and salvation) but in some things only, to wit, so, as they may subject themselves willingly, chearfully, lovingly, chastly, and dutifully unto their husbands: for, so doth the Church subject herself unto Christ. He addeth, secondly, the extent of this subjection and obedience, even to *all things*: which is not to be understood of all things absolutely, and without exception, *Acts* 5. 29, but all things lawfull, godly, honest, and which are not forbidden in the Word of God, even though they crosse the humour of the wives, and argue little discretion in the husband who commandeth them, *Numb.* 5. 14, 15. &c. for, nothing is excepted here but what is contrary to that subjection which is due to Him who hath commanded this subjection of wives to their husbands, as Paul commenteth upon an expression like to this, *1 Cor.* 15. 27. *Dott.* 1. As subjection in wives unto their husbands, is a most necessary duty; So, considering the inbred pride, arrogance and self-willednesse, which is in all the sons and daughters of *Adam* by nature, it is a work of no small difficulty to get wives perswaded to give that hearty, chearfull, loving and dutifull respect and obedience unto their husbands, which both the Law of nature, and the written Word of God do require from them: for, to what purpose else doth he reiterate this exhortation, and inforce it by so strong and convincing arguments?

ments? *Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be unto their own husbands.* 2. Though there be much unmortified corruption in the Church of true Believers; and a law in their members rebelling against the law of their mind, *Rom. 7. 23.* yet God doth look upon them as true and loyall subjects to Christ: in so far, as with the Spirit and better part (according to which God doth reckon with them) they serve the Law of God, *Rom. 7. 25.* and do groan after, and long for the time when they shall be fully freed from the body of death, and thoroughly subjected unto the will of God, *Phil. 1. 23.* for, while he saith, *as the Church is subject unto Christ*, it is supponed that the Church is subject unto Him, and looked upon by God as such. 3. The servants of Christ in pressing duties, ought mainly to guard against that extremity, which people naturally are most prone to fall into; especially, seing all the guards, which can be used, will have sufficient work to keep the heart from breaking over upon that hand: for, though there be some things excepted from coming under that obedience, which wives do owe to their husbands, as was cleared in the exposition; yet, because wives are more inclined to multiplie exceptions in this purpose, than to diminish them. Therefore he extendeth this obedience expressly to all things, leaving them only to gather from the circumstances of the Text, and other places of Scripture, those few things which are excepted; that thereby he may with one word cut off all unscriptural exceptions, limitations and restrictions, which imperious, aspiring spirits, impatient of the yoke, are ready to bound and straiten this submission and obedience by; *Let them be subject in every thing*, saith he.

Verf. 25. *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it.*

THe Apostle doth now exhort husbands to their duty: which he, first, proponeth summarily under the name of *love* to their wives, whereby the heart, and inmost affections of the husband ought to be so inclined and disposed towards his wife, as that not only he do wish her good, but also endeavour unto his utmost to bring it about: which is not to be so understood, as if the wife were not bound to love her husband also, *Ti.* 2. 4. But he presseth love upon the husband in particular, because he is most ready to fail in this duty of love, and to abuse that superiority which God hath given him over his wife, by proving rigorous and bitter against her, *Col.* 3. 19. Now this love enjoined to husbands, is not that common Christian love, which is extended unto all Christians of both sexes, as unto brethren and sisters in Christ, *Job.* 13. 34. but a speciall and conjugall love, which ought to be extended unto none, but unto a mans own wife: and it includeth cohabitation with his wife, and contentation with her love only, *Prov.* 5. 18, 19. a patient bearing with her infirmities and frailties, *1 Pet.* 3. 7. with a fatherly care to defend her, *1 Sam.* 30. 5, &c. to provide for her in all things, according to his power; which either her necessity or dignity of her rank doth require, *1 Tim.* 5. 8. lovingly to govern, direct and instruct her, *1 Cor.* 14. 35. yea, and to cherish her, ver. 29. Next, he inforceth this duty by two arguments: The first whereof, is proponed in this verse, to wit, Christ's example, who loved His Church, and from love gave Himself for it. See upon ver. 2. Which example of Christ's love, doth not only inforce the duty as an argument, but also point forth the right manner of the duty, as a pattern: In so far as the husbands love ought to resemble Christs, to wit, in the chastity of His love, who loveth none to

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His Church, *Job.* 17. 9. the sincerity of His love, who loveth the Church, not for His, but for her advantage, *Prov.* 8. 30. with *Gal.* 2. - 20. not for what is hers, but for her self, *Hof.* 14. - 4. and not in words only, but in deeds also, testifying His love by the effects, *Job.* 15. 13. and in the constancie of His love, who loveth whom He loveth unto the end, *Job.* 13. - 1. even, notwithstanding of their infirmities, *Psal.* 89. 30, 33. such ought the husband's love to be. *Doct.* 1. Though husbands are not to suffer their wives to exercise dominion and authority over them, that being contrary to the Ordinance of God, and the good both of husband and wife, ver. 22. 23. yet, seing the nature of men, and of husbands in particular with relation to their wives, are sufficiently bent of their own accord to exercise any power and authority they have, and rather to exceed their due, than to keep within it; therefore neither ought they themselves so much to mind their power, neither is it so necessary for them to be minded thereof by others, as to be carefull how to use their power and authority well, and as it ought: for, therefore the Apostle, though he commanded the wives to submit; yet, he doth not expressly bid the husbands rule over their wives, but, *husbands love your wives*, as thinking it more fit to let them understand how to use their power well, than to stir them up to the exercise of it. 2. The great and main duty, which an husband, as an husband, ought to learn, and so learn as to practise it, is love to his wife; and so to love her, as to make love kyth in all his deportment towards her, and in all those other duties, which he oweth to her; this being that one thing in the husband, which sweetneth the yoke of subjection laid upon the wife, giveth her courage under it, and maketh her willingly submit unto it, when it receiveth such a sweet return from her husband: for, *Paul* doth hold forth this as the husbands great lesson, and the sum of all his other duty; *Husbands love your wives*. 3. There is no husband, whatever he be for birth, parts, authority, or power, who

who is not tyed to love his wife, and to evidence his love to her in all those duties mentioned in opening up the Text: for, he speaketh indefinitely unto all; *Husbands love your wives.* 4. Neither is there any wife, to whom all those duties, flowing from the fountain of love, are not due by her husband. No meannesse of birth, (*Esther 2. 17.*) no personall infirmity, (*1 Sam. 1. 5.*) adultery being excepted, *Matth. 19. 9.* nor frowardnesse of nature (*Job. 19. 17.*) do prejudice her of them: for, he speaketh indefinitely also of the wives; *Husbands love your wives.* 5. Though it concerneth husbands and wives, and others also, who are tied together by mutual relations, as masters and servants, parents and children, to take some sort of inspection one of another, lest any of their relations come short of their duty, *2 King. 5. 13.* yet, it concerneth every one most, to make conscience of his own duty, not only to God, but also to his relations, and that, as for other reasons, so for this, There can be no greater encouragement to stir up his relations to make conscience of their duty to him: for, he commandeth every one to mind their own duty most, the wives to *submit themselves*, the husbands to *love their wives*, and so in the rest. 6. As Jesus Christ hath deigned Himself to undergo the relation of an husband to His Church; So this, and those other relations taken on by Him, are not empty titles; He doth the duties, which all such relations do bind to, even to the utmost. And particularly, He is such an husband, that for love to His Church, and all other duties flowing from love, He is exemplary unto all other husbands; seeing greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down His life for His friends, *Job. 14. 13.* for, as Paul implyeth here, and in the verses following, that Christ is the Churches husband; so he holdeth forth His love as a pattern to be imitated by all; *Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church.* 7. The love which a husband carrieth to his wife, ought to be founded, not upon beauty, riches, health, or any such thing only which

is subject unto decay, but also, and principally, upon that unchangable foundation of the love of Christ unto His Church: which is here held forth, not only as a pattern, but as an argument also, and the reason wherefore husbands ought to love their wives, even as *Christ also loved the Church.* 8. As those, whom Christ doth love with a speciall love, are only His, that is, real Believers, who are subject to Him, ver. 24. So Jesus Christ did give Himself to death, not for all and every one, *Joh. 17. 9.* but only for His Church, which is His *All*, and consisteth of some of all Nations, and of all ranks in the world, in which respect only Christ is said to have died for all, *1 Tim. 2. 6.* for, *Paul* astricteth both His love and His death to the Church; *As Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it.* See some further Doctrines gathered from the like words, ver. 2.

Verl. 26. That he might sanctifie and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word,

HE insisteth upon this excellent pattern of love, by shewing two ends, why Christ from love did give Himself for His Church. The first whereof, is attained in the present life, and expressed in this verse, to wit, that He *might sanctifie* those for whom He gave Himself. Which sanctifying work, as it is here taken, doth comprehend that whole complex businesse of translating the Elect from the state of sin and death, to the state of grace and life, even our regeneration, justification, and the gracious change of our dispositions, or sanctification strictly so called, as *Joh. 17. 17.* which he calleth a *cleansing* of us, expressing the manner how Christ doth sanctifie His Church, even by doing away the guilt, of sin, or obligation to wrath because of sin in justification, *Rom. 8. 1.* and the filth, power, and activity of sin, in the renovation of our natures after His own Image, *Rom. 6. 14.* which cleansing work, is here described from the externall means and instruments by which Christ

Christ doth cleanse His Church, and make application of the vertue and power of His death and sufferings, in order to that end. And those are, 1. the Sacrament of Baptism, called *the washing of water*, because of the externall rite and element used in that Sacrament; and *cleansing* is ascribed to this *washing*, not, as if there were any vertue bestowed upon the water by God; whereby grace is conferred and really wrought, 1 *Pet.* 3. 21. but because, though it be God alone, who wholly and effectually doth sanctifie and cleanse us, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. yet, this Sacrament, as also the other, are made use of by Him, not only to represent Christ, and those gracious saving works of His, 1 *Corinth.* 10. 16. but also to confirm the grant of them to us, if we believe, *Rom.* 4. 11- yea, and to exhibit a greater measure of those saving graces unto us upon our right using of them, 1 *Cor.* 11. 24. therefore is it, that the thing signified is ascribed unto the sign and seal. Now, the Apostle doth mention Baptism only, and not the Lords Supper, either because there is the same reason for both, and therefore it was sufficient to expresse the one; or, because Baptism is the first and leading Sacrament, and sealeth up our regeneration and new birth in a peculiar manner, *Tit.* 3. 5. and therefore it is most appositly mentioned here, where he speaketh of God's work in bringing sinners out of nature unto the state of grace. The second mean and instrument which God maketh use of, is the Word, to wit, the Covenant of Grace revealed in the Gospel, and preached by sent Ministers, *Rom.* 10. 15. which the Lord doth blesse for conveying grace to gracelesse sinners, and so, for sanctifying and cleansing them, not by any vertue in the sound, syllabs or sentences of this Word, but by the effectuall working of His own Spirit, *Acts* 16. 14. whereby He doth accompany His Word, when; and where He pleaseth, *Job.* 3. 8. *Dock.* 1. The love, which an husband carrieth unto his wife, ought to make it self evident, not only in these things which tend to her welbeing in things temporall, but also, and chiefly,

in his sincere endeavours to bring about her spiritual and eternall good, by labouring to instruct her in the saving knowledge of God in Christ, *1 Pet. 3. 7.* lovingly to admonish her for her faults, *Job 2. 10.* and to pray with her, and for her, *1 Pet. 3. 7.* for, the example of Christs love to His Church which he is to imitate, doth teach so much, seeing He from love gave Himself for the Church, that He might sanctifie and cleanse her. 2. As Gods Image was lost and forfeited by Adam's fall unto all his posterity: so there was not any possible way, for our recovering of it, except a price, and no lesse price than the blood of Christ, had been first payed to provoked justice for it: for, Christ behoved to give Himself, and thereby purchase sanctification for us, that so He might sanctifie and cleanse the Church. 3. Our dying Lord had an actuall intention in due time to sanctifie, and accordingly doth regenerate, justifie and sanctifie, yea, and bring unto glory all those for whom he died, and gave Himself a sacrifice and offering unto God: for, His intentions cannot be frustrated, but He must see the travell of His soul, *Isa. 53. 11.* Now, that He intended to sanctifie all such, is clear; For He gave Himself for it, that He might sanctifie and cleanse it. 4. As all those, for whom Christ our Lord did from love give Himself, and whom by His death He intended to sanctifie, were in themselves polluted and unclean, lying in their blood, defiled both with the guilt of sin already committed, and with the filthy vilenesse of sin yet indwelling, *Eph. 2. 1, - 3.* So, such was the fervency of love in Christ to lost sinners, and such was the vertue of His merit, that no uncleannesse of this kind did make Him loath them, or despare of getting them made clean; For that He gave Himself for the Church to cleanse it, supponeth that they were unclean, and yet He loveth them, and from love setteth about to cleanse them. 5. The stain and blot of sin, both in its filth and guilt, hath so much sunk down in, and polluted the whole man in soul and body, that no liquor under heaven can wash it out, or cleanse the
soul

soul from it, but only the washing cleansing vertue of Christs most precious blood; *For He gave Himself for the Church, that He might cleanse it.* 6. This precious liquor of Christs blood did not cleanse and sanctifie all those for whom He gave Himself, so soon as it was shed upon the crosse, no, there neither was, nor can be any cleansing of any by the blood of Christ, untill it be effectually applied unto the filthy soul: for, he mentioneth the Word and Sacraments, as the means whereby Christ applieth the vertue of His death, and ascribeth therefore this effect of cleansing unto them; *He gave Himself, that He might cleanse it, by the washing of water, by the word.* 7. As this work and duty of applying the cleansing vertue of Christs death by a lively faith (*Act. 15. 9.*) is of all the other most difficult; So the goodnesse of God hath provided many means, by the help whereof, we may be carried on towards it, the chief whereof are the Word preached, and the Sacraments administrated, the former containing the charter, or grant of Christ, and of all His benefits from God, unto every one, who will receive Him, *Job. 3. 16.* The latter being the great seal of heaven annexed to this grant, *Rom. 4. 11.* that thereby we may be more and more confirmed in the faith of it: for, His providing these means, doth point at both the difficultie of applying Christ, and his care to have us brought up to it; *That He might cleanse it, by the washing of water, and by the word.* 8. The Spirit of God prescribeth means unto Himself, by which He bringeth about the work of grace in gracelesse sinners, not to ry Himself absolutely, and in all cases to such means, but that we may be tyed to depend on Him in the use of them, His ordinary way being to convey grace by these: for, though He may sanctifie some from the womb, before they hear the Word, or receive any Sacrament, *Jer. 1. 5.* yet, He holdeth these forth, as the ordinary means, by which He cleanseth, even *the washing of water by the word.*

Verf. 27. That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Here is the second end of Christs giving Himself for His Church, as also of His sanctifying it; which end is not attained untill the life to come: for, (besides that he hath spoken of the Churches state of grace, ver. 26) the words here used, are so comprehensive and large, that they cannot be well understood to have their full accomplishment, untill Believers be brought by Christ unto that full perfection in grace which shall be attained in glory. Which state of perfection is here set forth, by that most perfect union and conjunction which the Church shall have with Christ, being presented to Him as the Bride to the Bridegroom, for the through accomplishing of the marriage; by vertue of which most perfect union the Church shall be *glorious*, that is, perfectly holy and happy, as he after explaineth, shewing all evil, whether of sin or misery, shall be removed, even the least spot of sin, or wrinkle through old age or misery, not excepted; and that all contrary good shall be bestowed, both perfect holinesse and happinesse, in such a measure, that the most rigid critick or *Momus* himself shall not find any inlack or defect in either, as the word, rendered *without blemish*, will bear. *Dott. 1.* All those who are justified and sanctified here, and none but they, shall be glorified hereafter: for, Christ must see the travel of His soul, *Isa. 53. 11.* which is not only to sanctifie those for whom He gave Himself, ver. 26. but also to glorifie them, and to bring them to glory by the way of holinesse; *That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church.* 2. Christ hath purchased by His death, not only sanctification to His Church, but also heaven it self, and therefore our glory in heaven is not merited by our holinesse, but, being purchased by Christ, is freely gifted

gifted to us, *Rom. 6. 23.* He gave Himself for it, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, saith he. 3. Though Believers, even while they are here, be brought near to God in Christ by faith, *Eph. 2. 13.* and have fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, *1 Job. 1. - 3.* yet all that fellowship and nearness, is but a distance and kind of estrangement, being compared with that most perfect presence and intimate fellowship, which shall be enjoyed hereafter; the former being but mediate, through the glasse of Ordinances, *1 Cor. 13. 12.* frequently interrupted, *Psal. 30. 7.* and no wayes full, *1 Cor. 13. 12.* but the latter shall be immediate, *1 Cor. 13. 12.* constant, *1 Thess. 4. 17.* and so full, that they who enjoy the meanest degree, shall find no inlack, *Psal. 17. 15.* for, he speaketh of Christs presenting His Church to Himself in glory at the great day, as if there were nothing but uncouthness and distance betwixt Him and the Church untill then; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, saith he. 4. Though every believing soul is, when the Father draweth it to Christ, contracted and handfasted with Him, *Hos. 2. 19, 20.* yet, for good and wise reasons, it pleaseth the Lord Christ to delay the taking of us home to Himself, and the accomplishment and consummation of the begun marriage, untill all the Elect, being effectually called, shall be presented to Him at once; and so this spirituall marriage shall be fully accomplished betwixt Jesus Christ and the Bride, the Lambs wife, *Rev. 19. 7.* even as in earthly marriages, there is first, a Contract, or Espousals, and then, for just and honest reasons, some space of time ought to interveen betwixt that and the full accomplishment of the marriage, *Deut. 20. 7.* *Matth. 1. 18.* for, Paul sheweth that then, at the great day the whole Church of real Believers shall be presented to Christ, as the Bride is to the Bridegroom, for the solemn consummation of the marriage; That he might present it to himself a glorious Church. 5. As believing souls, even after their being contracted with Christ by faith, and after they are

renewed and cleansed in part, do not get all their filthy garments put off, there being a body of sin and death which cleaveth unto the best: So, at the finall solemnization of the marriage in the great day, the Church of Believers, the Bride, and Lambs wife, shall be clad in garments of glory, being fully freed from the smallest remnant of sin and misery, and made wholly glorious both in soul, (*Matth. 22. 30.*) and body, *Phil. 3. 21.* for, he saith, *that he might present it unto himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, &c.* 6. Those garments of glory, and needle-work, wherewith the Church the Lambs wife shall be arrayed in the marriage-day, are dearly purchased, and freely bestowed upon her by Christ her Bridegroom and head: for, *Paul* saith, *Christ gave himself for the Church, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, &c.* 7. This perfect glorious state, wherein the Church shall be for ever with Christ her Lord, her Head, her Husband, is such, as none can positively declare what it is, yea, neither can the heart of man comprehend it, and all the knowledge which can be here in our state of imperfection attained of it, is not so much positive, or a knowing what it is, as negative, or a knowing what it is not, by removing all those things from it, which imply the least degree of sin and misery: for therefore doth *Paul* set it out here by four negatives, *Not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, and without blemish*, and by one affirmative only, *that it should be holy*.

Verf. 28. So ought men to love their wives, as their own bodies: he that loveth his wife, loveth himself.

Followeth the second argument to inforce this duty of love upon husbands towards their wives, taken from the near conjunction betwixt husband and wife, which he doth propound in this verse, by shewing that the wife is the husbands body, in so far, as by the law of marriage (which shall be explained, *ver. 30.*) they two become

come one flesh ; so that in loving her, he doth love himself, to wit, not so much, because his so doing tendeth to his own good and peace, (though that be also truth, *Prov. 5. 17, 18, 19.*) as that she is his own body, a piece of himself, yea and his whole self, or a second self, they two being one flesh ; and therefore he ought to love her, yea, and to love her with the same sincerity and ardency of affection, kything in the same or like effects, where-with he loveth his own body, yea both his soul and body, which are himself : for the words, *as their own bodies*, are both an argument to inforce upon them the duty, and a rule to direct them in the right manner of practising the duty. *Doct. 1.* As love in husbands toward their wives, after the pattern of Christs love unto His Church, is a most necessary duty ; So (considering the many quench-coals of love, which the mutual infirmities both of husbands and wives, do frequently furnish, together with that naturall pronenesse, which is in corrupt man, being advanced and preferred above others, to abuse his authority, to domineer with a kind of tyranny over such as are under him) it will be found a task not so easie, as at the first it would appear, for husbands to keep this affection and love flowing from the right fountain, and manifesting it self in all its necessary effects towards their wives : for, to what purpose else doth he reiterate this exhortation, and inforce it by so strong and convincing arguments ? *So ought men to love their wives, as their own bodies.* 2. That place of honour and superiority, which God hath given the man over the wife, as appointing him to be her head, doth tye him unto answerable duty ; so that the greater his honour is, the greater is his burden : and in particular, it bindeth him to love her ; and from love to govern, instruct, cherish her, and provide for her, and to all other things by proportion, which the head doth for the body : for, from what he said, ver. 23. that the husband is the head of the wife, he inferreth here, *So ought men to love their wives, as their own bodies.* 3. Though there be a sinfull

love to a mans self, whereby a man preferreth himself, and the fulfilling of his inordinate desires to Gods glory and the good of his neighbour, *Philip. 2. 21.* which by all means is to be eschewed and mortified, *Luke 9. 23.* yet, there is an orderly, lawfull, and allowed love to *self*, whereby a man doth seek his own preservation, both in soul and body, by just and lawfull means, with due subordination to Gods glory, and without any opposition to, or setting himself against his neighbours good: for, *Paul* supponeth this love ought to be in every man towards himself, and doth urge it, as the reason and rule of the love which the husband oweth to his wife, while he saith, *men ought to love their wives, as their own bodies: he that loveth his wife, loveth himself.* 4. The love which husbands do carry to their wives, ought not to have its rise from any such extrinsecal considerations, as love to their own peace and ease, fear of shame and disgrace, if, through want of love, secret discontents break out to publick strife, or from any satisfaction which they find to their carnal affections, but from respect to Gods holy Ordinance, whereby their wives are made a piece of themselves; hence their love shall be most native, operative, yea, and insuperable by any provocations or infirmities, when they shall look upon their wives as themselves, and consequently upon their infirmities, shame, hurt, as their own: for, *Paul* will have their love to flow from this fountain, while he saith, *men ought to love their wives as their own bodies, &c.* 5. That husbands may carry themselves aright towards their wives, (which holdeth of all superiours with relation to their inferiours) they would seriously consider, not so much what is in the power of their hand, and what they are able to do, or may be for their profit and advantage, or tend to get themselves obeyed, feared and respected to the utmost, as what they ought, and is incumbent for them to do, and what the Law of God, and the state they are in, do require from them as their duty: for, the Apostle repeateth the former exhortation, held forth,

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ver. 25. with the addition of one word, to wit, *ought*, whereby he mindeth husbands, that the thing pressed was their duty, and therefore they were to mind it; So *ought men to love their wives*, saith he.

Verf. 29. *For no man ever yet hated his own flesh: but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church:*

HE proveth the consequence of the former argument, to wit, that husbands are to love their wives, because they are their own bodies, by three reasons. The first is taken from the universal custom of all men, to wit, who are in their right wit, not demented and wofully deluded by the devil: which is set down, first, negatively, *no man did ever hate his own flesh*, or from hatred did any dammage to it; and next, positively, every such man doth to his utmost provide for, and allow upon his own flesh, all things necessary, both for *nourishing*, or feeding it, and for *cherishing* and keeping it warm, with such a sort of care and tenderneffe, as hens have toward their young ones, while, by casting their wings over them, they do with their own natural heat keep the young ones warm: for, the word rendered *cherishing*, is a metaphor taken from the practice of those tender and loving creatures: By all which, he not only proveth that husbands should love their wives, as being their own body; but also hinteth at some of those effects, wherein their love should be made manifest, whereof particular mention shall be made among the Observations. Secondly, he proveth the same consequence, and also further clear-eth with what care and tenderneffe the husband should carry himself unto his wife, as to his own body, from Christs example, who nourisheth and cherisheth the Church, His body, by providing for her, and allowing on her all things necessary for soul and body. *Doct. 1.* It is no lesse monstrous and unnatural, for a man to hate, and from hatred to carry himself austerely, saucily and undutifully to his wife, than if in a fit of phren-
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sic he should hate, and from hatred refuse to do all duty to himself; But in stead thereof to be cruel against himself: for, the Apostle mentioneth this, *no man, not demented, did never bate his own flesh*, to shew that therefore husbands ought as much to abhor and abstain from hating their wives; *for no man ever yet bated his own flesh*. 2. It is not sufficient that husbands do not carry any hatred to their wives, but they must also love them, and evidence their love to them, not in empty words, and flattering insinuations, but in providing all things necessary for them both in food and raiment: for, he holdeth forth indirectly the husbands duty to his wife, in that allowed care which every man hath, or ought to have of his own flesh; *No man ever yet bated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it*. 3. It is the duty of an husband to provide things necessary unto his wife, not grudgingly, or too sparingly, as to a stranger, or to his childe or servant; but liberally according to her rank and station, as being his equal; and confidently, without craving an exact accompt from her, of every thing which she receiveth, as having a common right and interest with him in all things that are his; and cheerfully, by testifying such contentment in her, even while he bestoweth things necessary on her, as he would do in bestowing the same or the like on himself: for, so much is implied in a mans nourishing and cherishing of his own flesh, which is held forth as the rule of the husbands tender care and liberal benevolence toward his wife; *but nourisheth and cherisheth it*. 4. The husband, under pretence of cherishing his wife, ought not to pamper her, or lavishly to waste his estate in upholding her prodigality in apparel, unnecessary, expensive ornaments, and such like vanities; but the rule according to which he is to walk in those things, and more than which the wife ought not to expect from her husband, nor yet complaine if he come up to it, is what his own rank requireth, his necessity doth permit, and that tender care which is taken by him

him in nourishing and cherishing himself: for, this is here held forth as his rule, *But nourisheth and cherisheth it*, to wit, his own flesh. 5. Though there be an excessive pampering of the flesh, which is sinfull and forbidden, when provision is made for it to fulfill the lusts thereof, *Rom. 13. 14.* yet there is a lawfull and necessary care of the flesh, or of a mans own body, whereby things necessary for food and raiment are bestowed upon it, in so far, that health and strength be not inlacking for discharging the duties of our calling: for, *Paul* doth not condemn, but approve this custom among men, that *no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it.* 6. As Christs example in His dealing towards the Church, is a most excellent copie, to be eyed and imitated by husbands in their carriage toward their wives, and that not only in their love, but in all those other duties, flowing from love, which they owe unto them; So it doth concern both husbands and wives, to eye this pattern much, and to draw their motives and encouragements unto their mutuall duties from it, as that which will much conduce to keep their hearts in a spirituall frame, even in those performances, and to prevent that carnal worldly disposition which the misguided care of performing such duties, as the married-state of life calleth for, doth usually contract: for, as he propounded Christs example, for a motive to, and pattern of the duty of love, ver. 25. so of those duties also, of nourishing and cherishing, which flow from it, in this verse, *even as the Lord the Church.* 7. A husbands care ought to extend it self. not only to nourish and cherish his wife in things temporal, and which concern her body only, but also in things spiritual, and which concern her soul; and therefore he would be circumspect, lest (under pretence of eschewing all suspicion of displeasure with her, and of giving necessary tokens and evidences of his love and kindnesse to her, in order to his outward cherishing her) he do neither willingly neglect the care of her salvation, or by fondnesse or lightnesse incapacitate himself

self to do her any good in that respect : for, Christ doth nourish and cherish His Church, by taking care of, and providing mainly for, the souls and eternall state of His People ; and husbands are commanded here to make Him their pattern, *Even as the Lord the Church*, saith he.

Verf. 30. *For we are members of his body , of his flesh , and of his bones.*

HE giveth here a reason why Christ doth so cherish His Church, where, in stead of naming the *Church* expressly, which the sequell of his discourse did require, he mentioneth himself and other true Believers among the Ephesians under the pronoun *we* ; the Church here spoken of, for whom Christ did give Himself, being only made up of such : And the reason is taken from that neer and strict union, or that spirituall marriage, which is betwixt Christ and Believers, whereof that ancient marriage betwixt *Adam* and *Eva* was a kind of type and shadow, as appeareth from the words here used, , which are taken from *Gen. 2. 23.* and were uttered at first by *Adam* concerning himself and his wife, but are here, by allusion to that marriage of theirs, made use of, to set forth the spirituall marriage betwixt Christ and His Church, the tie and bond whereof is so near and strict, that as the Apostle sheweth, all Believers are members of His body ; yea, not only of one nature with him, which is common to them with all mankind, but also as they are new creatures, they have their originall and nourishment from Him, even from His flesh and bones, in so far, as they owe the beginning, progresse and accomplishment of their spirituall life, to Christ His taking on of flesh, and His suffering in the flesh, and by the vertue of those His sufferings, they are quickned and fed, and so are of *His flesh*, and of *his bones*. *Doct. 1.* Then do we speak, and hear to our comfort and edification, these truths, which expresse the tender and warm care of Christ unto His Church,

Church, when we make application of them to our selves, and by a lively faith do enter our selves among these for whom He doth so care: for, the Apostle, having in the preceeding verse spoken of Christs nourishing and cherishing of His Church, applyeth that to himself, and other true Believers among the Ephesians, while he saith, *for we are members of his body.* 2. Then may we upon good grounds apply these generall truths unto our selves, when, as members of Christs mysticall body, we draw our spirituall life and nourishment from that vertue and influence which Christ hath purchased by His sufferings in the flesh: for, upon this ground, *Paul* doth substitute himself, and other true Believers in stead of the Church, and claimeth interest in Christs tender and warm care, whereby He doth nourish and cherish His Church, while he saith, *we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.* 3. There is no relation, which Christ hath taken on toward His Church, but it bindeth him to, and accordingly he will perform all those answerable duties which men under these relations are bound to perform toward those to whom they have them: for, he giveth a reason, why He did nourish and cherish His Church as a man doth his body, and a husband ought to cherish his wife, because he had taken on the relation of an head and husband to His Church, while he saith, *we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.* 4. As true Believers have a twofold being, one naturall, and another spirituall; so they have a twofold originall, answerable to each of these: In their naturall being they owe their originall under God unto their parents, as being bone of their bones, and flesh of their flesh, as *Eva* the first woman did owe it to her husband. But as they are renewed and born over again. they owe their spirituall being, not to the will of the flesh, or the will of man, *Job. 1. 13.* but to the vertue of Christs obedience, and sufferings in His flesh, *1 Job. 4. 9.* for, he saith not, *they are bone of His bones, and flesh of His flesh,*

as *Adam* saith of his wife, *Gen. 2. 23.* to point that she did owe her naturall being unto him, as being come and made of him, but that they were of *His bone and flesh*, to wit, in their spirituall being; as they were renewed and members of His body; for we are members of his body, of His bone and of His flesh.

Vers. 31. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joyned unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

THis verse, in the literal, plain and historical sense of the words, holdeth forth the law of marriage, binding all married parties in all times; which was pronounced by *Adam*, *Gen. 2. 24.* and approved by God Himself, *Matth. 19. 5.* And the words taken in this sense contain the third reason, to prove the former consequence, ver. 28. that seing wives are the bodies of their husbands, therefore they should be loved. The argument is taken from that law of marriage, expressly declaring that for this cause, to wit, because the wife is bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, as the cause is expressed, *Gen. 2. 23, 24.* which is the same in effect with the cause given, ver. 28. even because she is the body of the husband, to which this verse literally taken doth relate, or to the thirtieth verse immediatly preceeding, in so far as the strict union, which is between married parties, is there alluded unto: Upon all which causes, or rather one and the same cause expressed in all those places, that law doth declare, first, That the man is to leave father and mother, to wit, not by casting off naturall affection to his parents, *Gen. 44. 34.* or by refusing to help them in their strait, *1. Tim. 5. 4.* but by loving his wife more than them, and by leaving his fathers family, if he, his wife and they cannot live all together, and by joyning in a new family with his wife, *Gen. 28. 5.* as is further cleared by the second thing here declared, to wit, that he ought to be joyned inseperably to his

his wife, and that both in affection, *Prov.* 5. 19. and cohabitation, dwelling with her, *1 Pet.* 3. 7. The word in the original, doth signifie such a *joyning*, as that of two boards of timber, firmly glued together; not as if a man were to reside constantly at home: for, the Merchant, the Lawyer, and men of other employments also, must sometimes go abroad, *Prov.* 7. 19, 20. But his fixed dwelling should be with her, and his presence also, so far as his necessary calling shall permit, so that he is not without necessity to be absent from his own home, *Prov.* 5. 19. And, thirdly, this law declareth, that *they two shall be one flesh*; which implyeth, first, a most strict union, so that they cannot be separated, (except in the case of adultery, *Matth.* 19. — 9 — and wilfull desertion of the one party, persisted in, after all meanes used to the contrary, *1 Cor.* 7. 15) more than a piece of a mans body, may be cut off from the rest: And, secondly, a most intimate communion, whereby they have common goods, common friends, yea, and all things common, as if they were but one person: And thirdly, the lawfull and sanctified use of the marriage-bed, allowed unto them of God, which out of the case of marriage is sinfull and damnable, *1 Cor.* 6. 16. *Heb.* 13. 4. But for further clearing of the words, know, that beside their literal and historical sense, God intended that the purpose contained in them, concerning the carnal marriage of man and woman, should represent and shadow forth somewhat of Christ, and of that spirituall marriage between Christ and the Church, as appeareth from the situation of the words immediatly after ver. 30. which doth evidently speak of Christ, as is already shown; and before verse 32. where he declareth, that the purpose in hand is a mysterie, and to be understood of Christ and the Church: now, the purpose here expressed, doth hold in Christ, by analogie and proportion, in so far as Christ did leave His Father, by laying aside the glory which He had with Him, *Joh.* 16. 28. and taking on the form of a servant, *Philp.* 2. 8. and did
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leave His mother *Mary* also, and her house and family, *Luke* 2. 49. that He might purchase a bride unto Himself (See ver. 25. 26.) to whom He doth cleave inseparably, *Rom.* 8. 35. and with most tender affection, *Heb.* 4. 15. by vertue of which spiritual marriage, Christ and Believers become, though not one flesh, yet one spirit, *1 Cor.* 6. 17. being most strictly tyed together by His Spirit, and the grace of faith, from which conjunction, Believers so espoused, become fruitfull in good works, and do bring forth fruit unto God, *Rom.* 7. 4. From the literal sense of this verse, *Learn*, 1. The love of married parties ought to be very great, and second to no love else, but that which we owe to God: for, even the love we owe to parents, from whom we have our being, ought to give place unto it; *A man shall leave father and mother*, saith he, *and be joyned unto his wife*. 2. It is lawfull and allowed of God unto all persons of all ranks, being come to mature age, (*1 Cor.* 7. -36-) and especially to those who have not the gift of continency, (*1 Cor.* 7. 9.) to enter the married state of life, only if they marry in the Lord, *1 Cor.* 7. -39. and therefore the doctrine forbidding marriage to all those who bear office in the Church, is the doctrine of devils, *1 Tim.* 4. 1, 3. for, the text speaketh of all men indifferently; *A man shall leave father and mother, and be joyned to his wife*. 3. Divine commands are alwayes founded upon most just reasons, which would be eyed by us, that so our obedience may be more willing and chearfull, yea. a piece of reasonable service unto God, *Rom.* 12. 1. for, this command given here unto husbands, to cleave unto their wives, is not nakedly propounded, but with a strong reason annexed for inforcing the duty enjoyned by it: *For this cause*, saith he, *shall a man be joyned unto his wife*. 4. As children are not to remain alwayes childish, but being come to age and understanding, ought to bestir themselves in providing things necessary and honest, according as the station, wherein they are placed by God, shall require; So parents ought to remit some-
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what of their fatherly authority over their children, as they grow in age and understanding, not expecting nor requiring that children, now come to age, should absolutely and in all things as formerly, depend upon the counsell and direction of parents, or give themselves wholly to iminde their concernments, neglecting every other thing else which may concern themselves: for, this Law, supponeth a state of childehood, wherein children are to be wholly under the authority of parents minding their concernments and at their direction, and that their coming to age, and entering the married state of life, doth give them more liberty to follow their own direction, and to do for themselves; *a man shall leave father and mother, and be joyned to his wife.* 5. Whatever hath been the corrupt custome of men, to the contrary, *Gen. 4. 19.* Yet, according to the first institution of marriage, only two, one man and one woman, and not moe, either of the one sexe or the other, may be lawfully married together at once: for, the law saith, *a man shall be joyned to his wife, not to his wives, and they two, not they three, or four, shall be one flesh.*

From the mysticall application of the words, and of the purpose comprehended in them, *Learn,* 1. So great a depth is Scripture, that in some parcels thereof, which do appear most plain and easie to be understood, many dark and hid mysteries do lye undiscovered: for, under this plain history of the marriage of our first parents, that great myserie of the spiritual conjunction of Christ and His Church, was also held forth, as the Apostle doth here make clear; *For this cause shall a man leave father and mother.* See further to this purpose, upon *Gal. 4. ver. 24. doct. 1, 2. Doct. 2.* So holy and honourable is the ordinance of marriage in it self, and so highly ought it to be esteemed of by us, that God maketh use of it to shadow forth that blessed union and most holy communion which is betwixt Christ and His Church: for, what was spoken historically of marriage, is here applied mystically to Christ; *For this cause shall a man leave, &c.*

3. As the Church of true Believers, is the Bride, the Lambs wife, espoused already to Christ; So never any man did more to purchase a Bride to himself, than Christ hath done for His. He laid aside the glory which He had with the Father, and became of no reputation, as was mystically foretold in this history of the first marriage; *A man shall leave his father and mother.* 4. The great travel and trouble which Christ was put to for purchasing a Bride unto Himself, doth not make Him regard her the lesse now when He hath her: for, He doth inseparably cleave unto her, with most ardent and exemplary affection, as was also mystically foretold; *And shall be joyned to his wife.*

Verf. 32. *This is a great myserie: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.*

THE Apostle concludeth this purpose concerning the spiritual conjunction of Christ and His Church, here made use of to illustrate that near conjunction betwixt husband and wife, with an observable acclamation, that it is a *great myserie*: which word, as it is usually taken in Scripture, doth signifie a thing secret, not obvious to every understanding; and hid, either in it self, or in its cause and reason, whether it be held out in plain terms, or under the vail of some external sign or figure to represent it. See *1 Tim. 3. 16. Eph. 3. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 51. Rom. 11. 25. 2 Theff. 2. 7.* And lest, by reason of his speaking all alongs of the bodily marriage betwixt husband and wife, any had so far mistaken him, as to think he called that a myserie, therefore he explaineth himself, by shewing he was to be understood, not of the bodily marriage, but of the spiritual, or that strict union or conjunction which is betwixt Christ and His Church. Now he calleth this union a *great myserie*, because it is a thing hid in it self, before it be revealed, *1 Cor. 2. 7. 8.* yea, and after, it remaineth unsearchable by the light of reason, how Christ, now glorified in heaven, can be one with us on earth, and can only be acknowledged

ledged by faith, *Heb. 11. 1.* Beside, the bonds of this blessed union and conjunction, are not naturall or bodily, but spirituall, even the Spirit of Christ, *Eph. 2. 18.* and the grace of faith, *Eph. 3. 17.* and therefore, though the conjunction, following upon these bonds, be real, (*Job. 17. 21.*) operative, (*Job. 15. 5.*) and indissoluble, *Job. 10. 28, 29.* yet the way of it, is wholly spirituall and heavenly : and consequently not so much to be searched into by reason, what, or how it is, as to be believed that it is, and improved for attaining and finding in our selves those blessed effects, which do attend it where it is.

Dott. 1. That Papists have not ground from this place to make marriage a Sacrament properly so called, is clear from the Apostle's own commentary, whereby he sheweth by the mystérie here spoken of, he doth not understand the bodily marriage, but the spiritual : beside, that the word *mystérie*, as we shew, in the use of Scripture, doth signifie a sacred secret, not obvious to ordinary capacity, and therefore every mystérie is not a Sacrament, (*See 1 Thess. 2. 7. Rom. 11. 25.*) *This is a great mystérie : but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.*

2. The more a man doth attain to know of this mystérie of the mystical union and conjunction, which is betwixt Christ and His Church, the more he will be ravished with admiration at the unsearchable deepnesse and profundity of it, so far will he be from thinking himself able sufficiently to comprehend it : for, even *Paul*, who saw as far in this mystérie as any other, *Eph. 3. 4.* doth stand, admire and cry, *This is a great mystérie.*

3. As Ministers are bound to set forth to the Lords People that most near and blessed union betwixt Christ and believing souls, and to presse upon them the study of the knowledge of it ; So, both Pastors and People have need of much sobriety of spirit in diving into this subject, not trusting to the quicknesse of their own wit, nor judging of it by natural reason, but resting upon what God hath revealed and made known concerning it, and choosing rather to remain ignorant where he hath not

revealed, than curiously to search and pry further than is revealed: for, *Paul*, while he is instructing them in this subject, seeth it necessary to minde them of the profoundness of it; *this is a great mysterie.* 4. As we are ready through ignorance, or inadvertence, to mistake the right meaning and sense of Scripture; So the Spirit of God, speaking in Scripture, hath carefully guarded against all such mistakes, while he doth clear the right and genuine sense of a doubtful and dark Scripture, by Scripture it self, either in the same place, or another: for, so doth *Paul* here, while, to obviate a possible mistake, he saith, *But I speak concerning Christ and the Church.*

Verf. 33. Neverthelesse, let every one of you in particular, so love his wife, even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

HE doth here, by way of diversion from dipping further at this time in that spiritual conjunction of Christ and His Church, exhort both husband and wife, to learn from that forementioned law of marriage a short sum of their respective duties: and, first, that every husband, without exception, or admitting any excuse, *would love his wife as himself*, that is, seeing she is a piece of himself, as ver. 28. otherwise if the particle *as*, were only a note of similitude, comparing different things, and making a mans love unto himself the rule of his love unto his wife, Then every man's neighbours should be equally loved with his wife; for, every man is to love his neighbour as himself in that sense, *Gal. 5. 14.* And, secondly, he enjoyneth the wife, that she *reverence*, or as the word signifieth, from love do fear her husband: the meaning whereof is, that she inwardly acknowledge that degree of honour which God hath put upon him, *1 Cor. 11. 3.* and give evident testimony of her inward esteem, in words, *1 Pet. 3. 6.* actions, and whole carriage, and especially in her loathness to offend him, *1 Pet. 3. 2. Doct. 1.* Though there be some latent mysteries

steries intended by the Spirit of God, to be set forth by some plain histories, recorded in Scripture, besides their historicall and literall sense; yet we are not, upon that pretence, to turn the whole Scripture into an allegory, as if no more were intended in those Scriptures by the Spirit of God, but only to set forth the spirituall mysterie; We ought to look upon the historicall and literall sense of them also, and mainly, and make such use of them as being so taken, they will afford: for, *Paul*, having shown the mystical and allegorical use of *Adam's* words, doth divert from that consideration of them, and pointeth forth what the plain history doth teach concerning the duties of husband and wife; *Neverthelesse*, saith he, *Let every one of you in particular so love his wife.*

2. It is not unprofitable for people, that Ministers do wind up their large exhortations in a short and pithy sum of what they have spoken at greater length, whereby the memory of people may be somewhat helped, and their affections also may be more forcibly wrought upon, when the strength of a large discourse is contracted in two or three words, and presented both to the understanding and affections of people at once: for, so doth *Paul* in the conclusion, sum up what he had spoken at large, from ver. 22. of the duties both of husbands and wives, in two succinct sentences; *Let every one of you so love his wife, &c.* 3. Then do people receive and hear with profit these exhortations which are spoken unto all in generall, when they make application of them to themselves, as if they were delivered unto them in peculiar, and by name: for, what the Apostle spoke indefinitely unto all, ver. 25. he doth here make particular application of it unto every one; *Neverthelesse, let every one of you in particular, so love his wife.* 4. As married parties are ready to forget their mutuall duties, yea, and to sport at such doctrine, which doth presse and enjoin those duties; so the Ministers of Christ, would not only inculcate them the more frequently, but also deliver their exhortation of that kind, with greater

weight and authority ; for, the Apostle not only repeateth, but, in an authoritative commanding way, bindeth this exhortation on them ; *Let every one love his wife ; and the wife see that she reverence.* 5. As we would labour to infix in our memories a short sum of our most necessary duties ; so also of the most moving and taking argument, to enforce the practice of these duties, otherwise the naked knowledge of our duty will prove but ineffectual, to lead us captive, to walk in it : for, Paul summeth up both the husbands duty, and the strongest argument to enforce the duty, taken from that near union between him and his wife ; *Let every one of you so love his wife, as himself.* 6. Then, and only then is the duty of subjection and obedience of inferiours toward their superiours, sincerely and heartily discharged and accepted of by God, when it floweth from inward reverence and hearty esteem, in the former, toward the place and dignity, conferred by God upon the latter : for he here commandeth wives to give reverence to their husbands, thereby pointing at the right fountain of that subjection, which he had formerly pressed upon them, ver. 22, 24. even fear flowing from love ; *And the wife see that she reverence her husband.*

C H A P. VI.

IN the first part of this Chapter, the Apostle insisteth further upon those duties, which are incumbent to Christians as they are members of families. And, first, he presseth upon children obedience to their parents, 1. from the equity of it, ver. 1. which he cleareth from the fifth command, ver. 2. Secondly, from the advantage which should redound to them by it, ver. 3. Next, he presseth upon parents, to hold off the two extremities of rigidity and indulgence towards their children, ver. 4. Thirdly, he presseth upon servants obedience

obedience to their masters, which is set forth by severall of its necessary qualifications and properties, ver. 5, 6, 7. and inforced from the great advantage, which they should reap by it, ver. 8. Fourthly, he presseth upon masters their duty, which is to be accompanied with the like qualifications, *fear* and *trembling* only being excepted, ver. 9.

In the second part, he presseth one duty which belongeth unto all Christians in generall, even to prepare for a Christian warfare. And, 1. more generally, that they would take unto them spirits, by making use of the strength which they had without themselves in the Lord Christ, ver. 10. and of the saving graces of Gods Spirit inherent in themselves, ver. 11. which he enforceth from the nature of the warfare and terror of the adversary, ver. 12, 13. Next, he exhorteth them more particularly, to put on, and make use of six several pieces of the Christian armour, 1. The grace of sincerity, 2. The inherent righteousness of an holy conversation, ver. 14. 3. A resolute frame of heart to charge through all difficulties, ver. 15. 4. The grace of faith, commended from its excellency and usefulness, ver. 16. 5. The well-grounded hope of salvation. 6. Acquaintance with the Lords written Word, ver. 17. Thirdly, he presseth the exercise of prayer, as necessary for the obtaining and right use-making of all those, ver. 18. exhorting them to pray for utterance and boldnesse to himself in particular, ver. 19. because of his office and bonds, ver. 20.

In the third part of the Chapter, he concludeth the Epistle, 1. by shewing he had sent *Tychicus*, (whom he highly commendeth) to inform them of his own particular affairs, ver. 21. and to comfort them, ver. 22. Next, by his usuall fare-well-wish for them in particular, ver. 23. and for all the lovers of Christ in generall, ver. 24.

Verf. 1. *Children, obey your parents in the Lord : for this is right.*

THe Apostle doth now fall upon the duties of parents and children. And, first, beginneth with children : the word rendered *children*, signifieth these who are begotten, even though now come to perfect age. See upon *Col. 3. ver. 20. doct. 2.* These he enjoyneth to obey their parents : where, by *parents* are meant not only the immediate, but also the mediate parents, as grand-fathers, &c. *Gen. 50. 23. yea,* and those also, who are in the place of parents, *Luk. 2. 48, 51.* Now, the obedience here enjoined, is as comprehensive, as that *honour* enjoined to be given unto parents by children in the fifth command, which is cited, *ver. 2.* to enforce the obedience here spoken of : and it implyeth, first, inward reverence, or acknowledgement of that eminency, in which God hath placed parents above their children, joyned with fear, *Lev. 19. 3.* and love, *1 Tim. 5. 4-* to be testified, as by other outward signes, so by reverent speaking of them, and to them, *Prov. 30. 17.* 2. Obedience, more strictly taken, so as that children receive the instruction of their parents, *Prov. 1. 8.* execute their lawfull commands and directions, even though they be burthensome and hazardous, *Gen. 37. 13. 1 Sam. 17. 20.* and accept with patience their reproof and correction, *Prov. 15. 5.* even though their parents be in some respects faulty therein, *Heb. 12. 9, 10.* And, thirdly, gratitude and thankfulness, so as that they help parents, when their necessity requireth, *1 Tim. 5. 4.* and bear with, and cover their infirmities, *Gen. 9. 22, 23. Prov. 23. 22.* Now, this duty of obedience in children, is first explained from the manner, motive, and rule of it, while he saith *in the Lord.* See this phrase explained upon chap. 5. ver. 22. Secondly, it is urged by two arguments, the first whereof, is in this verse, and taken from the equity and righteousness which is in it,
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even that children should do all the forementioned duties unto their parents, to whom under God they owe their very being : The Laws of all Nations, even of the most barbarous, do enjoin it ; and all creatures , who have life and sense , are carried in some measure by a kind of instinct unto it. Hence *Learn*, 1. The great and main duty, which a childe , as a childe, ought to learn , and so to learn as to practise , is to obey his parents, even to receive their instructions, and execute their lawfull commands ; this being a duty, which of any other, proud and rebellious nature is most averse from, and yet such as nature it self doth plead for its equity : so, that whatever children be otherwise for beauty, for strength , for quicknesse, wisdom, activity, learning, preferment or honour ; yet this being inlacking, they fight against the very law and light of nature , and so are a reproach to their parents , *Prov.* 19. 26. and do accelerate the judgement of God upon themselves , *1 Sam.* 2. 25. for, though the obedience here enjoined , doth draw with it all those other duties , which children owe to their parents, as was shown in the exposition ; yet, it doth, in the first place, signifie a submissive hearkening unto, and obeying of their lawfull commands , as the word in the Original doth imply, which he doth mainly presse upon children ; *Children obey your parents.* 2. This duty of obedience to parents, belongeth unto all children whatsoever, so that neither age, sexe, place, honour, or condition, do exempt them wholly from it , *1 King.* 2. 19. for, he speaketh indefinitely unto all children , and of both sexes ; *Children obey your parents.* 3. Children are bound to obey not only one, but both their parents, the mother as well as the father : yea, the holy Ghost doth expressly provide for the mother, giving her the pre- cedency, *Lev.* 19. 3. because, her sexe being weaker, she is the more subject to be despised : for , he useth a word common to both father and mother , while he saith, *Children obey your parents.* 4. It is not sufficient that children obey their parents, either from a natural instinct

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or fear of their displeasure, or hope of great things to be received from them and enjoyed by them; but their obedience must flow from conscience of duty towards God, who doth enjoin it, and be regulated by, and subordinated to, that obedience, which they owe to Him; otherwise their obedience is only heathenish and naturall, but not Christian: for, he commandeth, *Children, obey your parents in the Lord.* 5. The nature of man, is, since the fall, become to perverse and backward, that there is need of a spur of earnest exhortation, inforced with strong and evident reason, to stir us up, even to those duties which are written in broadest letters upon every mans heart by nature: for, the Apostle seeth it necessary, not only to exhort unto this duty of obedience to parents, but also to enforce his exhortation by arguments; *For this is right*, saith he. 6. The first and chief motive, which ought to set us on work to any duty, is not so much the advantage, which may redound to us by the practice of it, as the equity and righteousness which is in the thing it self, as being commanded by God, and well pleasing in His sight: for, he enforceth obedience to parents, from the equity of it, before he mention (ver. 3.) the profit, which should accresse unto children by it; *For, this is right*, saith he.

Verf. 2. Honour thy father and mother, (which is the first commandment with promise.)

THe Apostle (passing-by all other reasons to prove the equity of the former injunction) doth pitch upon one, to wit, the Law of God enjoining this duty in the fifth Command. The scope of which Command, is, to prescribe all those duties which inferiours owe to their superiours, and, by consequence, which superiours owe to their inferiours; where all superiours are expressed by the name of *father* and *mother*, because the authority of parents is most natural, and the yoke of it most easily comported with; and therefore all other authority goeth under

under the name of that, to render it lesse invidious to those who are to be subject unto it. And the duty enjoyned to inferiours, is their giving honour to superiours, which implyeth (as was shown, ver. 1.) reverence, obedience and gratitude. Now, this command is described from its precedency, as being the first and most weighty command in all the second table; and from the manner of propounding it, not nakedly, but with a speciall promise of a particular mercy subjoyned to this command in particular, and expressed, ver. 3. which cannot be said of any other command: for, the promise annexed to the second, is a generall promise of mercy, made to such as keep all the commands. Hence *Learn*, 1. Whatever God hath commanded in His Word, is most righteous, equitable and just: for, he proveth that it is right for children to obey their parents, because the Law of God enjoyneth *honour thy father and mother*. 2. Though the Law of Ceremonies, given by Moses, doth not oblige Christians, (Christ, the substance of those shadows, being come, Col. 2. 17.) nor yet the judicall Law, which was given to the Jewish Commonwealth, and to stand and fall with it, Numb. 36. 6, 7. yet, the moral Law, or the Law of the ten Commandments, as being never yet repealed by God, doth stand in force, and is binding unto Christians: for, Paul doth urge this duty of obedience unto parents upon children, because the morall Law enjoyneth it; *Honour thy father and mother*, which is the first commandment with promise. 3. So far is God from abolishing different ranks, degrees and states among men, that He taketh speciall care to have those, and publick order in those inviolably preserved, while He not only enjoyneth the respective duties of superiours and inferiours, but also giveth them the first and chief place among all those other duties which man doth owe to man: for, saith he, *honour thy father and mother*, by whom, as we shew, are meant all lawfull superiours; and he addeth, *which is the first commandment*, to wit, in the second table. 4. Though God,

God, as absolute Lord, might enjoyn us obedience to His commands without giving any promise of a reward; yet, so backward are we to our duty, and so mercifull is God, that, to overcome our backward unwillingnesse, He is pleased sweetly to allure us by His gracious promise of a free reward unto our obedience: for, here is a *commandment with promise*.

Verf. 3. That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

Here he sheweth what that promise is, and thereby giveth a second argument to inforce the duty of obedience upon children unto parents, taken from the profit and advantage which should redound unto them by it: for, the Lord doth here expressly promise prosperity, and long life to all such as make conscience of this duty. For understanding of which promise, know, that though it was to be understood, even in the most plain and obvious sense of the words, as it was held forth to the ancient Church, to whom God used to promise and bestow things carnall and earthly, as an earnest and shadow of things heavenly, *1 Cor. 10. 11.* Yet, even then there was a tacite condition implied, to wit, in so far as the thing promised should serve for Gods glory, *2 Chron. 35. 24.* and the good of those to whom the promise was made, *1 King. 14. 13.* But, now under the New Testament, though this promise, even in the letter, be doubtlesse fulfilled unto many; Yet, it is chiefly to be understood in a spirituall sense, in so far as the godly obedient childe, whether he live long or short, doth alwayes live well, because he liveth in Gods favour, *Psal. 63. 3.* and cometh to a full and ripe age, as having reached the prize and mark, for attaining whereof, life is given, even the salvation of the soul, *Isa. 65. 20.* Hence *Learn, 1.* Though our first and chief motive unto duty, ought to be the equity and righteousness which is in the thing it self, as being commanded by God; Yet we may eye the pro-

promised reward, whether temporall or eternall, as a secondary motive and encouragement, providing it be not looked at as a thing to be merited by our obedience, *Luk. 17. 10.* for, as (*ver. 1.*) he inforced this duty of obedience from the equity of it, in the first place ; So here, from the advantage which should redound unto children by it, in the second place ; *That it may be well with thee.* 2. So merciful is God to man, that He hath injoynd only thole things as equitably righteous and conducing to His own glory, which tend also, and no lesse to our own profit and advantage, so that we need not to separate our own well-being from His glory, but are alwayes to seek the former as a mean of, and in subordination to, the latter : for, the Apostle sheweth, that this duty of obedience in children, as it tendeth to glorifie God in the first place, it being a doing of what is right according to His command ; So it tendeth to the advantage of children in the next : *That it may be well with thee.* 3. To live well and long upon the earth, is in it self not to be despised or under-valued, in so far as though the godly man, the longer he liveth, he is the longer kepted out of heaven, yet he findeth the more proofs and experiences of Gods goodnesse here on earth, *1 Job. 3. 13.* and hath the larger opportunity of a fair seed-time of glorifying God here ; and, consequently, shall of free grace reap a more plentiful harvest of comfort at death, and of glory hereafter, *2 Cor. 9. 6.* for, he promiseth this as a blessing to the obedient childe, *that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long upon the earth :* which (as we shew) is accomplished sometimes in the very letter. 4. Then do we rightly apply unto our selves, under the New Testament, those things which were spoken to the Jews under the Old, when, passing-by what was in such things typical, or astricted to the infant-state of the Church which then was, we look upon what was substantial, moral, or of common equity as belonging unto us yet : for, so much doth the Apostle teach, while, citing the promise annexed to the
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fifth command, he saith only, *that thou mayest live long upon the earth*, and omitteth the last clause of that promise, to wit, *which the Lord thy God giveth thee*, *Exod. 20. 12.* whereby that promise was in a peculiar manner ascribed to the Jews, and to the land of *Canaan*, which He did give them to inherit. 5. The best way to thrive, even in things worldly, and to attain prosperity, health, wealth and length of dayes, so far, at least, as shall serve for Gods glory and our own good, is, to live a godly life, by taking heed thereto according to Gods Word and especially by giving due reverence and obedience to our natural parents, and consequently to all our lawfull superiours, because of the Command of God: for, unto the Command, *ver. 2. Honour thy father and mother*, this promise is subjoyned, *that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long upon the earth.*

Verse 4. And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

HE doth here, in a word, set forth the duty of parents: And because they are apt to abuse their parentall authority, and chiefly the fathers, therefore he enjoyneth to them, and by consequence to the mothers, to beware of provoking their children to wrath, or of imbittering their spirits; which is done, either by denying them that which is their due, in food, raiment or meanes of education, *Lam. 4. 3.* or, by commanding things in themselves unjust, *1 Sam. 20.—31.* or, by unjust and rigorous commands about things in their own nature indifferent, *1 Sam. 14. 29.* or inveighing with bitter words against them, chiefly when there is no cause, *1 Sam. 20. 30.* and lastly, by beating them, either unjustly, when there is no fault, *1 Sam. 20. 33.* or immoderately, unseasonably or basely, when there is a fault. Next, he doth guard them against the other extremity of too much indulgence to their children, while he ex-
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horts them, first, *to bring them up*; or, as it is in the original, to nourish them, which comprehendeth not only their giving unto them present maintenance from the womb, *Gen. 21. 7.* but also their providing for them against the future, *2 Cor. 12. 14.* and training them up in any lawfull imployment, whereby they may be able under God to sustain themselves and theirs, *Gen. 4. 2.* And secondly, to joyn *nurture* and *admonition* with their education: by the former whereof, is meant the timous, seasonable and compassionate correction of children which parents are bound to dispense, *Prov. 13. 24.* and by the latter is meant the information of their judgement, how they ought to carry themselves towards God in things religious, *Gen. 18. 19.* and how towards man in righteousnesse, civility and good manners, which is also a great piece of the duty of parents towards children, *Prov. 31. 1, 8, 9.* And lastly, he addeth, that their education must be in the admonition of the Lord Christ, that is, such as becometh Christians, and by which young ones are instructed chiefly in the knowledge of Gods Word, of Jesus Christ, and of the way of salvation held forth by Him. Hence *Learn*, 1. Such is the prevalencie and interest of sin in the soul of man now fallen, that in some it wholly extinguisheth, or much weakeneth the most intense of our natural affections, and maketh them run in a channel quite contrary unto what they ought: for, the Apostle supponeth, that even naturall affection in some parents to their own children will be so far weakened, as by their unnatural carriage to provoke and embitter them, while he saith, *Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath.* 2. To provoke or stir up others unto sin, maketh us guilty before the Lord, even of those sins which others commit, being provoked thereunto by us, *Hos. 6. 9.* for, *Paul* forbiddeth, and condemneth this as a sin in parents towards their children; *Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath.* 3. So small command have all men naturally over their passions, especially when provoked by reall injuries from

from others, that the strongest of natural bonds cannot keep them in order, and at under, except they be restrained by grace, but they must transgress the bounds: even children cannot bear injuries from their very parents, without being incited thereby to sinfull anger; yea, such is the corruption of some children, that they can bear lesse at the hands of their parents than of any other else: for, so much is implied, while he saith, *Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath.* 4. A necessary duty is not to be neglected upon pretence that others may take occasion to sin against the Lord from it, and particularly, parents are not to withhold seasonable and necessary correction from their children, even although their children should be enraged and provoked to wrath by it: for, notwithstanding he forbiddeth fathers to provoke their children to wrath, yet he will not have them upon that pretence neglecting to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. 5. As people are most ready to run from the one extream of any sin unto the other, from prodigality to sinfull parcimony, from rigiditie to too much lenity; So the servants of Christ, while they are dissuading people from the one extremity, had need most carefully to guard, lest under pretence of eschewing that, people do rush upon the other: for, the Apostle, while he forbiddeth too much rigidity in parents, he seeth it necessary to guard them against the other extremity of too much indulgence and lenity, while he saith *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* 6. It is the duty of parents, not only to provide for the bodies and outward estate of their children, but also, and mainly to care for their souls, endeavouring by all meanes possible to bring them up for sons and daughters to the Lord Almighty: for, as they are to bring them up or nourish them; so also to beat down sin in them, by nurture or correction, and to make them know Jesus Christ the Lord; *But bring them up* (saith he) *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* 7. As parents are to correct their children be-
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times; so they ought not herein to satisfie their own rage and passion, but to go about it with a composed minde, as a piece of service injoynd by God, aiming mainly at the amendment of the faulty childe, and, in order hereto, joyning instruction and admonition with correction; yea, and seeking the blessing of Christ to accompany it: for, the Apostle will have nurture and admonition joynd together, and both of them *in the Lord: In the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

Verse 5. Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ:

HE commeth now, in the last place, to the duties of masters and servants; and, first, beginneth with servants. See the reasons why he insisteth so long on their duty, upon *Col. 3. 22.* Now, servants were of two sorts, some did serve for hire, or as apprentices, *Mal. 3. — 5 —*. Others were bond-slaves to their masters, being either taken in war, *2 Chron. 28. 10.* or bought with money, *Lev. 25. 44.* The Apostle speaketh to both those sorts; and, first, giveth a sum of their duty, to wit, obedience *to their masters according to the flesh*: by which designation of *masters*, he limiteth their dominion and mastership to the bodies of their servants, to things temporall and of the flesh only, leaving the soul and conscience to God only, who is the alone Lord of conscience, *Matth. 23. 8.* And the obedience here enjoined to be given by servants unto those, as it is largely taken, doth consist in a chearfull executing of all their lawfull commands, *Matth. 8. 9.* even though the thing commanded be laborious, painfull, *Luke 17. 7, 8,* 9. and rigid, *1 Pet. 2. 18.* in a meek and patient bearing of their rebukes, *Tit. 2. 9.* yea, and corrections also, *1 Pet. 2. 18, 20, 21.* and in with-holding their hands from picking, and their tongues from abusing their masters by alledging commissions from them, which they

have not, for their own advantage. *2 King. 5. 20, &c.* and in abstaining carefully from all contriving and procuring of their masters prejudice for benefiting themselves, or others, *Luke 16. 1, 2, &c.* Secondly, he giveth some properties of this obedience, as first, it must be with *fear and trembling*: which property consisteth in a solicitous and earnest care, and indefatigable diligence in following their masters affairs to his greatest advantage, (*Gen. 31. 38, 39.*) joyned with reverence flowing from love to their masters person, *1 Tim. 6. 1.* and with fear of his displeasure, *Mal. 1. -6-* and is contrary to pride and laziness. See *working with fear and trembling* taken in this sense, *Phil. 2. -12.* Secondly, their obedience must be with singleness of heart, which is opposed to a double heart, hypocrisie and deceit; and it implyeth that faithfulness, which ought to be in servants towards their masters, as minding and intending from their very heart the thriving and success of their affairs in all things and at all times, *Tit. 2. 10.* And, thirdly, it must be *as unto Christ*, whereby he expresseth the manner, motive and rule of their obedience. See upon chap. 5. ver. 22. *Doct. 1.* Christian liberty, and spirituall freedom from sin, Satan, and Gods wrath, is not inconsistent with civil bondage and subjection. Christ and the Gospel teacheth no man to cast off that yoke, but how they are to carry themselves as becometh Christians under it: for, he speaketh to servants, as servants, enjoining them civil subjection, though they were now converted and partakers of that spirituall liberty purchased by Christ, *Gal. 3. 28. Servants be obedient to your masters.* 2. The condition of none is so base or despicable, but free grace in God will stoupe so low, as to take notice of them in it, yea, and bestow upon them all those precious blessings purchased by Christ, that so grace may appear to be grace, when it hath compassion on those who are in all respects most unworthy and vile: for, even some of those servants, who for the most part were bond-slaves, and as little esteemed of by their

their masters, as their very beasts, were converted by the Gospel, and are therefore here spoken unto as converts; *Servants be obedient to your masters.* 3. Such is the sufficiency of Scripture, that there is no rank, state, nor degree of persons, even from the King to the bond-slave, to whom it doth not serve as a full and perfect rule to direct them how to walk acceptably in their stations: for here is in it a direction even for servants; *Servants be obedient unto your masters.* 4. The great and main lesson which servants, as servants, ought to learn, and so to learn as to practise, is to be obedient to their masters; and, in a word, faithfully and diligently and according to their masters own lawfull directions to go about their affairs; So that whatever they be otherwise for wisdom, breeding, or profession of piety, yet if they be inlack- ing in this, either neglecting their businesse, or preferring their own wisdom in carrying of it on to the direction of their masters, they are a reproach to the Gospel, in so far as they make not conscience of that which the Gospel requireth from them most: for, this is it he doth mainly presse upon them; *Servants be obedient unto your masters.* 5. This duty of obedience belongeth unto all servants towards their masters, So that neither birth, breeding, nor their near relation of kindred unto their masters, do exempt them from it, providing they be servants: for, he speaketh indefinitely unto all servants; *Servants be obedient unto your masters.* 6. This duty of obedience from servants, is payable to all masters without exception, whether they be good or bad, rich or poor, great or small, no diversity of that kind doth detract from the masters authority, nor ought to lessen the servants obedience: for, he speaketh indefinitely also of masters; *Servants be obedient unto your masters.* 7. As the power of masters, yea, and all earthly power whatsoever, doth only reach the body, and the outward temporall concernments of inferiors, and cannot reach their consciences, soul or spiritual concernments, except to constrain the outward man unto the obedience of what

God hath already prescribed in those ; So neither ought superiors to make their will an absolute rule to be followed by their inferiors in all things , nor yet inferiors to give up themselves wholly to follow all their directions with a blind and implicit obedience ; for, they are but *masters according to the flesh*, that is, have power over the bodies of servants only, 8. It is not sufficient to do what is commanded by God in any thing, except we do it in that manner wherein it is commanded : and particularly, servants must not only yeeld obedience to their masters, and do them service ; but they must do it in such manner as it ought to be done : and in speciall, their obedience and service must be qualified, as the Apostle hath expressed, even with fear and trembling, singleness of heart, &c. See the exposition of this, and the two following verses. 9. A proud heart, evidencing it self in a saucie, malapert, awlesse and carlesse carriage, is most unbecoming the condition of servants, and highly displeasing to God in them, as being opposit to that property of fear and trembling, which ought to accompany their obedience ; *Be obedient with fear and trembling* 10. Though servants are to stand in awe of their masters displeasure, and even from fear of that to go about their service, *Mal. 1. 6.* yet they must not be acted from fear alone, nor think themselves exoner-ed, when so much is done as his displeasure will be eschewed ; but, being acted from other motives also, they must make conscience of severall other things in the matter and manner of their service, which the awe and fear of their master would never constrain them unto : for, although the master know not the heart, and consequently the servants need not to trouble themselves about their heart from the fear, or dread of him ; yet, they are to obey in *singleness of heart*. 11. A servant can never discharge his duty with that sincerity and tenderness, which he oweth unto his master, except he have an high esteem of Christ, and in the first place, become an obedient servant unto Him, that so from
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love to Christ he may yeeld himself obedient to his master in Christ, and so far as obedience to him doth not crosse that obedience which he oweth to Christ: for, he biddeth them be *obedient unto their masters as unto Christ*, and so implyeth they must be first obedient unto Christ.

Vers. 6. *Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.*

HERE are moe properties of the obedience required from servants, or rather an explanation of that property already expressed, to wit, *singleness of heart*: which he explaineth, 1. negatively, while he opposeth it to eye-service, which is here condemned in servants, who then are guilty of this sin when they seem respectiue to their masters person, and carefull of what concerneth him, himself being present; or, when they know their deportment will otherwayes come to his knowledge, but at other times are unfaithfull and carelesse: which sin of eye-service is aggregated from this, that those who are guilty of it are *men-pleasers*: not as if it were simply unlawfull for servants to endeavour to please their masters, for that is commanded, *Tit. 2. 9.* but when they only seek to please them, and that they may seem to please them, care not to deceive them, by appearing to be that in their presence, which really they are not; and consequently, do not labour to approve themselves to the all-seeing eye of God: This is the sin of *men-pleasing* here condemned in servants, as being near of kin to eye-service. Next, positively, by shewing that then did they serve in singleness of heart, when, 1. they behaved themselves as *the servants of Christ*, knowing that they behoved to be countable to Him, who knoweth the double dealing even of the very heart. *Jer. 17. 10.* and that He will accept of their lawfull obedience unto their masters, as service done to Him. And, secondly, when taking God for their party, and looking upon the

lawfull commands of their masters, as the will of God unto them, they do set about to execute them cordially and sincerely, even from the heart, without dissimulation and hypocrisie. *Doth. 1.* A single heart is alwayes constant in good, and the same in secret which it is before the view of others: for, *eye-service*, whereby servants are one thing before their masters, and another thing behind their backs, is here opposed to *singlennesse of heart*; *not with eye-service.* 2. A man may so walk, as to content the eye of those who behold; and to please men to the full, who can see no further than the outside, *1 Sam. 16. -7.* and yet his way be highly displeasing unto God: for, though *eye-service* be a sin displeasing unto God; Yet servants may please men with it, as is here implied: *not with eye-service, as men-pleasers.* 3. When a mans chief design is to gain applause, and to be well esteemed of by men, he hath no further regard of his duty, either to God or men, than what doth make way for the promoting of that design: for, *men-pleasing* is the fountain of *eye-service* in servants, or of their neglecting duty, but in so far only as they may be seen and approved by their masters; *not with eye-service, as men-pleasers.* 4. To propose unto our selves the pleasing of men, and gaining of approbation, good liking and applause from them, as our great design to be gained upon any termes, is inconsistent with the work of grace in the heart, and with that subjection which we owe to the Lord Christ: a man cannot serve two masters, *Matth. 6. 24.* for, he opposeth men-pleasers to the servants of Christ; *not as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ,* saith he. 5. The meanest and basest of services, which men go about in their lawfull callings, being done with the right qualifications, from right motives, for a right end, and in the right manner, is service done to Christ, and will be accepted of by Him. as such, because He doth command it; and it is done, if done aright in obedience to His command: for, he will have the meanest servants to go about their service *as servants to Christ,*

and doing the will of God. 6. Then may we reckon the going about of our ordinary imployments to be service done to Christ, when we look upon what we do as commanded by God, do it in obedience to His command, and are heartily sincere in what we do, as aiming singly without hypocrisie and dissimulation, at the honour of God, and the good of these whose good we pretend to, and ought to aim at : for, he explaineth how servants may reckon themselves as servants to Christ, even by their *doing the will of God from their heart.* 7. Our eyeing of God and taking Him for our partie, to whom we must give an accompt, even in those things which we do unto men, is a singular help to make us single and straight in all our affairs, and to banish all double dealing, deceit, hunting after applause, and all such-like vices, which our heart presumeth to make bold with, when we look to no higher partie than poor secklesse man : for, that they may be single in heart, and eschew eye-service and man-pleasing, he directeth them to take God for their partie ; *but as servants to Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.* 8. Then is the will of God acceptably done, when not only the outward man, as tongue, hand, and other members of the body, do act every one their part, but the heart and in-most affections are brought up to the work ; otherwise our performances are but a lame sacrifice, as being destitute of that which God doth mainly call-for, *Prov. 23. 26.* for, he saith, *doing the will of God from the heart.*

Vers. 7. With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men :

HERE is a third thing required to the service and obedience of servants in singleness of heart, even that it be with *goodwill* and love to their masters person, and to the thriving of his affairs, which is opposit to the doing of their service grudgingly, unpleasantly, or from fear of punishment and an eye to their own advantage only ;

and that they may be encouraged to do service from this principle, even to their unworthie masters, he directeth them to fasten their eye upon the Lord, who had subjected them unto such masters, and to know that in yeelding that obedience unto them, which was commanded by God, they did service to Him rather than to them, and might therefore do it with better will : for, the negative particle doth not deny simply, but comparativly : So that, *as to the Lord, and not to men*, is, to the Lord more than to men. *Mark 9. 37. Doct. 1.* Fear and love of one and the same person, may well consist, and both be a conjunct principle having influence upon one and the same duty ; yea, then only is that duty, which floweth from fear, acceptable unto God, when the partie to whom the dutie is done, whether it be God or men, is not only feared, but also loved : for, the obedience of servants must not only flow from fear and trembling, ver. 5. but also from love and good-will ; *with good-will doing service.* 2. That a man do service to God, whether in the duties of immediate worship, or of his ordinary calling, it is of necessity required, that he do it cheerfully, not as of necessity and constraint, but with a delight and pleasure in it, as in that which God doth call for at his hands : the Lord doth love a cheerfull giver, *2 Cor. 9. -7.* for, that servants may go about their service to their masters, as servants to Christ, and thereby do the will of God, it is required, *that with good-will they do their service.* 3. The most base, and meanest of employments, which God doth call us to discharge, ought to be undertaken and discharged by us with cheerfulness and good will, it being no small credit for prodigal rebels to be entrusted in the meanest piece of service to Him : yea, and the more mean and seckleffe the service be which we discharge, it ought to be gone about with more of cheerfulness ; that what is inlacking in the worth of the work, may be made up by the hearty affection and good-will of the worker : for, he will have even servants going about their basest employments with good-will

will, because they did thereby service to God, and He did call them to it; *with good-will doing service as to the Lord.* 4. So ingrate is man for the most part, and so slow to reward those from whom he receiveth favour and advantage; yea, so prone to requite them evill for goods. *Judg. 9. 17. 18.* that a man can never heartily and with such good-will as he ought, do service to the most of men, except he look to God in and above men, and know that they are thereby doing service to Him, whom to serve in the meanest imployment, is a sufficient reward for it self, *1 Chron. 29. 14.* besides that He will have none to serve Him for nothing, as the following verse doth teach: for, the Apostle implyeth they can never serve their masters with good-will, except they look to God more than to man: therefore he saith, *with good-will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men.*

Verf. 8. Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

THe Apostle, having thus held forth the necessary requisits of that obedience enjoined unto servants, he doth, thirdly, perswade them to it in this verse, by an argument taken from the great advantage they should reap thereby, while he sheweth, that though their reward from their earthly masters was little, or none, yet so mercifull is God, that of His own free grace (*Rom. 11. 35.*) and not for any merit in mans service (which is none, *Luke 17. 10.*) He doth largely recompense (sometimes here, *Mark 20. 30.* and alwayes hereafter, *Col. 3. 24.*) all those who make conscience of doing good, or of going about their calling as service to Him; and that in this free retribution of a reward, He taketh notice of the poor bond-servant, who serveth God in his calling, as well as of free-men and masters. And that this argument may have the more force with them, he appea-
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leth to their own conscience and knowledge for the truth of it, if it was not so as he had affirmed. *Doct. 1.* Then, and then only, may a man reckon himself to do good, or a good work acceptable to God, when the thing he doth is warranted by Gods will revealed in His Word, when he doth it in singlenesse of heart, from an inward principle of love and good-will within in the heart, and in obedience to Gods command, or as service unto Him: for, the obedience required from servants, was to be so qualified. ver. 5, 6, 7. and he doth here call it a *doing good: Whatsoever good thing a man doth.* 2. Even the basest drudgery of servants being so qualified, is a doing of good, and cometh within the compasse of good works, which the Lord will take notice of as such: for, it is with an eye to the imployment of servants mainly that he here speaketh: *Whatsoever good thing a man doth, the same shall be receive.* 3. As it is lawfull to eye the promised reward for our encouragement in the way of duty; So it is the mind of God that every one should in the due and right order, make particular application unto themselves of such promises as are in Scripture held forth unto all in general: for, he holdeth forth the promise of a reward, which is made unto all who do good in general, to be made use of by Christian servants, for their encouragement in particular; *Whatsoever good a man doth, the same shall be receive of the Lord.* 4. Promises have no influence to excite unto duty, except the truth of them be known and believed, so that ignorance and misbelief of divine truths, are a great cause of abounding profanity and neglect of duty in all ranks: for, he layeth the weight of their encouragement to duty from this promise upon the knowledge and faith which they had of it; *knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall be receive of the Lord.* 5. The Lord, in dispensing rewards, looketh not to the externall beauty, splendour, or greatnesse of the work, but to the honesty and sincerity of it, how mean or inconsiderable soever it be otherwise: for, the promise of a reward, is

to the outwardly mean and base works of poor servants, if so they be honest and sincere, as well as to the more splendid, honourable and expensive works of their rich masters: *The same shall be receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.*

Verf. 9. *And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your master also is in heaven, neither is their respect of persons with him.*

HE doth here, in the first place, set down the duties of masters towards their servants, 1. positively, while he enjoyneth them *to do the same things*: which is to be understood, not of the duties themselves, which are much different from the duties of servants, (See them briefly summed up upon Col. 4. ver. 1. doct. 1, 2.) but of those properties and conditions which are common to the duties of both; so, that the master is bound to discharge his duty towards his servant in singleness of heart, as service to Christ, in obedience to the will and command of God, from his heart, with love and good-will, even as the servant is bound to minde those qualifications in his duty towards his master. Next, negatively, while he forbiddeth *threatning*, or rather commandeth to relax and moderate threatening, as the word doth signifie; and so the thing forbidden is excesse in threatening and boasts, when they are alway menacing, oftentimes for light occasions, and sometimes for none; And by proportion, all fierce and inhumane way of dealing with servants by masters, whether in words or deeds, is here forbidden also. In the second place he inforceth this duty, by minding them of that which they did know, at least ought to have known, even that they also as well as their servants had a master above them to call them to an accompt, to wit, God, who, to make the argument more pungent, is described, 1. from His magnificent and stately Palace, where His glory shineth, to wit, the Heaven; not as if He were only there, and nowhere else,

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Jer. 23. 24. but to set forth His absolute dominion, *2 Chron.* 20. 6. His omniscience, *Psal.* 11. 4. His holiness, *Isa.* 57. 15. and His omnipotency, *Psal.* 115. 3. so that their sin could not be hid from Him, His holy Nature did hate it, He had both right and power to punish it. 2. From His impartiality and justice, in judging so that He respecteth not persons, nor faces, outward shew and appearance, as the word signifieth; and therefore, by *persons* is not meant the substance, or personal subsistence of men, but their outward state and condition, even that which is conspicuous in man, and doth commonly make him more or lesse esteemed among men, as country, state of life, riches, poverty, wisdom, learning, &c. and consequently to *respect persons*, is to wrest judgement from a sinfull respect to the outward state, condition of parties, and such other things which are wholly extrinseck to the cause in hand, which vice the Lord is free of, as being the righteous Judge of the world, who cannot be byassed by fear, love, pittie, or any other inordinate affection, as man is; and consequently, the outward dignity, power, or wealth of masters, would not make Him spare them, if they made not conscience of their duty. Hence *Learn*, 1. Though masters are freed from subjection and giving obedience unto their servants; yet not from doing duty unto them. Neither is there any power among men so absolute, no not that of Kings and supream Rulers, *Rom.* 13. 3. -4. -6. but it implyeth an obligation, through vertue of Gods Ordinance, upon those who are invested with it, to make conscience of severall duties towards their inferiours and subjects: for, he saith, *And ye masters, do the same things unto them.* 2. It concerneth masters in their place as much as servants in theirs, not only to go about their duty, but also to advert to the manner wherein they do it, even that it be done in sincerity, cordially, chearfully, taking God for their party more than men: for, he saith, *Ye masters, do the same things unto them.* 3. It is not only lawfull, but in some cases necessary for masters

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sometimes to threaten, boast, cast down their countenance upon negligent, lazy, disobedient, and chiefly upon profane servants, providing they do it moderately, and keep off excess: for, the Apostle doth not simply forbid all manner of threatening, but only prescribeth a moderation thereof; *Forbearing, or moderating threatening.*

4. The Servants of Christ in the reproof of sin, ought mainly to guard against such evils, as those to whom they speak, through custom, perverse inclination, or a deluded mind, are most ready to fall into; and so ought people set mainly against such sins in themselves, and thereby defend the wall where it is weakest, and the enemies greatest force doth lie: for, because masters are most prone to break out against their servants in threatening, railing and reviling words, as thinking words are but wind, and their tongues are their own, *Psal. 12. 4.* therefore he forbiddeth that evil mainly and expressly: *Forbearing threatening*, saith he.

5. As it is very usuall for powers on earth, sinfully to oversee, and not to punish the cruell and unjust dealing of masters towards servants; So those sins which are most connived at by men, are most severely taken notice of by God: for, the Apostle mindeth them, that God would call masters to an accompt how they carried towards their servants, though men did not take notice of them: *Knowing that your master also is in heaven.*

6. It is too too ordinary for men in place and authority above others, to carry themselves as if they had none above them to be countable unto; or, at least, to dream that the Lord will not take such strict account of them, as of their underlings and servants; for, the Apostle obviateth such thoughts, and so doth indirectly imply, that masters did so think, while he saith, *your master also is in heaven*, and *there is no respect of persons with him.*

7. Ministers are bound to inculcate, even those truths upon the Lords people, which they in charity do judge to be thoroughly known already by them; because truths are better known than made use of by the most part; yea, the calling to mind of known

known truths by the publick Ministry, doth through Gods blessing put a new lustre and efficacy upon them for inciting unto duty : for therefore, though the Apostle supponeth they knew this truth, yet he putteth them in remembrance of it ; *Knowing that your master is in heaven.* See what is observed further upon this description of God, from His royal palace, and impartiality in judging, upon *Col. 3. ver. 25. doct. 4, 5. and Col. 4. ver. 1. doct. 4, 5, 6.*

Verf. 10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

THe Apostle (having from chap. 5. ver. 21. exhorted unto those duties which belong to Christians as they are members of families) doth now in the second part of this Chapter, exhort unto one duty, which belongeth unto all Christians in generall, the making conscience whereof, is necessary for practising all, or any of the fore-mentioned duties, even that they would prepare and make ready for a christian warfare. And being in the first branch of this part of the Chapter, unto ver. 14. to inforce this duty more generally, he doth, first, propone the exhortation, to wit, that *finally*, or notwithstanding of all he had formerly spoken, this one thing did remain yet necessary to be delivered by him, (for, so much the Original word doth imply) even that they would *be strong*, fortifie themselves, take to them spirits and resolutions in order to their Christian warfare. And this, first, by looking at, and making use of that strength which they had, and all Believers have without themselves in the Lord Christ, who is engaged with them, as leader and generall in this warfare, *Jeb. 10. 28.* And particularly, they are to look at, and set their faith upon *the power of His might*, or His almighty power, in order to their being strong and resolute, as that, which alone was able to answer all their faintings and fears, arising either from their own weaknesse, *Rom. 4. 19. with 21.*

or the strength of enemies, *Joh. 16. 33.* Hence *Learn,*
 1. It is not enough for Christians to know what they
 ought to do by vertue of their severall relations, except
 they also set about the practice of their duty according
 to what they know of it: for, the Apostle, having al-
 ready instructed them in the knowledge of their duty,
 he sheweth this one thing was yet remaining, even to
 prepare themselves with resolution and courage in order
 to their better practising of it: *Finally*, or, this yet re-
 maineth, that ye *be strong in the Lord.* 2. As the duties of a
 Christian life, whether in our generall or particular call-
 ing, will not be discharged by us without a battell and
 conflict with strong difficulties and terrible adversaries;
 So it is the duty of Christs Ministers, not only to presse
 duties upon the Lords people, but also to forewarne
 them of these difficulties and dangers which ly in the
 way of their duty, and to instruct them how to wrestle
 with and overcome them all: for, so doth *Paul*, having
 already pressed upon them the duties of their generall
 and particular callings, he doth here not only forewarne
 them, but also forearm them against difficulties and
 hazards; *Finally, be strong in the Lord.* 3. Though the
 Lords Servants sometimes may, and are also bound to
 command and charge the people of God committed to
 their charge, to make conscience of their duty, *1 Tim.*
6. 17. yea, and also denounce against them most terrible
 threatnings, if they neglect it, *2 Tim. 4. 2. Tit. 1. 13.*
 yet, so long as gentle exhortations, enforced with sweet
 smooth insinuations and rationall demonstrations of the
 equity and necessity of the thing, may prevail, they are
 rather to be followed by them, thereby testifying their
 affection unto, and charitable esteem of their hearers as
 of rationall men, who, are in a greater probability to
 be wrought upon by insinuations, desires and convinc-
 ing reasons, than by threats and boasts: for, the Apo-
 stle doth here gently exhort them, enforcing this exhor-
 tation by an insinuitive compellation, while he calleth
 them *brethren*, and afterwards convinceth them of the
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equity and necessity of that to which he doth exhort them; *Finally, my bresbren, be strong in the Lord.* 4. So strong and terrible are these difficulties which Christians are assaulted with in the way of duty, (See ver. 12.) that there is need of more than ordinary strength, resolution and courage, for meeting with them, and charging through them. Faint hearted-cowards and lazie sluggards, will never face them, far lesse overcome them, *Prov. 22. 13.* for, in order to their rancountering those difficulties, he biddeth them *be strong*, that is, take to them spirits and courage. 5. No naturall courage nor hardinesse of spirit, arising from mans naturall temper, (though in some respect sufficient for making men endure any temporall hardship without succumbing, *Prov. 18. 14.*) is able to underprop and bear us up against the furious assaults of such spirituall adversaries, and breaking discouragements, arising from such multiplied difficulties as daily do assault us in our Christian course; for, he biddeth them *be strong*, not in themselves or in the power of their own naturall resolutions, but *in the Lord, and the power of his might.* 6. No strength of grace inherent, no spiritual courage flowing from the graces of Gods Spirit in us, is alone, and by it self sufficient to make us stand and bear us through as victors in this spirituall conflict: we must besides, be underpropped by the power and strength of Christ the Lord without us, by whose influence our inherent graces must be actuated and applied to work, *Philip. 2. 13.* directed in their work, *2 Thess. 3. 5.* recruited daily with a new supply of strength, *Isa. 40. 29.* and keepest from fainting under renewed assaults, *Luke 22. 31, 32.* otherwise they can do nothing, *Job. 15. -5.* for, he forbiddeth them not only make use of grace inherent, as we shall hear, ver. 11. but also and antecedently, *be strong in the Lord*, or in that strength which they had without themselves in the Lord Christ. 7. As whatsoever is in the Lord Christ, must and will be forth-coming, for the encouragement strengthening and bearing through of Believers in this spirituall

spirituall conflict; So their greatest strength, and ground of courage in all their conflicts, doth ly in, and ought to arise from, not what they are in themselves, or can do for themselves, but what the Lord Christ is engaged to be and do on their behalf: for, he exhorteth them, *be strong in the Lord*, thereby implying, that the Lord Christ would be forthcoming for them, and that they were to draw their resolution and courage from thence.

8. Christian souldiers, in order to their own encouragement and strengthening for this spirituall conflict, ought to lay hold upon, and by faith make use, as of whole Christ, and of all those rich and glorious perfections which are in Him, So especially of His almighty power and strength, by vertue whereof, He doth all His pleasure, *Isa. 46. -10.* neither is there any thing too hard for Him, *Gen. 18. 14.* The power of enemies and greatnesse of difficulties, together with our own weakness, call for this: besides, that many of our discouragements arise, not so much or only from misbelief of His good-will to help, as from our atheisticall doubtings about His power and strength, which sometimes are expressed, *Psal. 78. -27.* and sometimes work subtilly under ground, as if not His power but only His good-will were doubted of, which is clear from this, that His good-will is not usually questioned, but when difficulties are great, and to sense and reason insuperable. Hence it is, that, having commanded them to act their faith upon whole Christ and all that is in Him, he biddeth them pitch upon His almighty power in particular; *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.*

Verf. 11. *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

THE Apostle will have them to be strong and fortifie themselves, next, by acquiring and making use of spirituall strength inherent in themselves, while he enjoyneth them to *put on the whole armour of God*, that is,

the whole furniture and matter of Christian vertues, and all the means which God hath appointed for guarding the soul against Satans temptations, as he cleareth afterwards in the particular pieces of this armour. Now, those graces of Gods Spirit, are called *armour*, because they defend the soul from, and strike out against, Satan and sinfull lusts, as the armour of souldiers in wars do defend the body and hurt the enemy; and the *armour of God*, both to shew it must be spirituall and not carnall, *2 Cor. 10. 5.* as being fitted for the heart, soul and conscience, and not the bodily members; and that God is the author, maker and inventor of this armour, and accordingly doth bestow it, *1 Jam. 1. 17.* In the latter part of the verse, he sheweth the end why they should be strong in the Lord, and put on this armour, even that they might *be able to stand*, that is, to hold on their Christian course (as a souldier standing orderly and keeping his ground) not running forth beyond the bounds of their calling to cast themselves upon tentations and hazards, nor basely fleeing from or ceding to them when God calleth for valiant resistance; which duty of *standing*, is illustrated from the party whom they were to encounter and to fight against, even Satan, whose subtile wiles and stratagems, whereby he labour-eth to intrap souls, cannot be otherwayes resisted but by putting on of this spirituall armour. Hence *Learn*,
1. Christians are so to rely upon and make use of the covenanted power and strength of Christ, as not to ly by lazie and idle themselves: They must also have, and accordingly make use of strength inherent in them, and bestowed on them by their Lord and General Jesus Christ. Confidence in Christ, and the conscientious use of all those helps and means appointed by Him, cannot be separated: for, the Apostle, having commanded them (*vers. 10.*) to place their confidence in the power of Christ, will have them here to acquire and make use of spirituall strength inherent in themselves, while he saith, *Put on the whole armour of God.* **2.** It is only
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the armour of God, the graces of His Spirit, and such other means as are appointed by Him, which Christians are to make use of in this spirituall conflict: whatever armour we use besides, (whether will-worship invented by our selves, *Col. 2. 18.* or carnall motives, to oppose the power of sin, or poor subterfuges to cover the guilt of it, *Jer. 2. 22.*) will hurt, but cannot help in the day of battel: for, he biddeth them *put on the armour of God*, that is, the graces of the Spirit of God, and all such means as are appointed by Him. 3. That a Christian may be truly valiant and come off with honour and safety in this spirituall conflict, he must be wholly armed, and no power of the soul or sense of the body left naked without a guard. And in order to this, that not any saving grace be wanting, *2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7.* or the use of any mean appointed by God, neglected, *Mark 9. 29.* there being work for all, and use of all at one time or other, under one case or other, in relation to one temptation or other: for, he biddeth *put on the whole armour of God*, and that not any one piece thereof be wanting, or any part of the man be left naked. 4. It is not enough to have the root and habits of saving grace in the heart: but we must also exercise these graces, and be alwayes acting some one or other of them, *1 Cor. 15. 58.* and all of them as occasion offereth, and as suitable objects are presented by God, *Gal. 6. 10.* otherwise we are not in a fitting posture for this spiritual combat. When grace is idle, sin and Satan are most diligent: for, when he biddeth them put on this armour, he meaneth not only a putting on by acquiring the seeds and habits of saving graces at conversion; (for, some of them were already converted) but also a putting on by using and exercising the grace which some of them at least already had: *Put on the whole armour of God.* 5. The great adversary of the Saints, is the devil, who seigeth against them most by lies and calumnies, speaking evil of God and His wayes to them, *Gen. 3. 5.* misrepresenting their own state to themselves, *Isa. 49. 14.* and

calumniating one of them to another: for, the devil is here spoken of as their chief adversary, and the name here given unto him, doth in the Original signifie a calumniator and slanderer; *That ye may stand against the wiles of the devil.* 6. As Satan is most witty and subtil; so he imployeth all his skill and subtilty for carrying on this battell against the Saints, while he most cunningly contriveth, and with no lesse subtilty conveyeth such ensnaring tentations as he knoweth, all things being considered, will be most taking with the person tempted: for, here he speaketh of Satans wiles, the word signifieth methodick witty stratagems. 7. However Satan doth sometimes transform himself into an angel of light, *2 Cor. 11. 14.* and covereth his foul designs with most plausible pretences to zeal for God, *Luke 9. 54, 55.* to pity and natural affection, *Mat. 16. 22.* or generally to something which is in it self commendable; yet, his great design in all his tentations, even when he speaketh fairest, is to drive the party tempted from his station, either by making him turn the back as a coward, *Neb. 6. 10, 11.* or driving him beyond the bounds of his calling, *Matth. 26. 51.* or presently to render up his arms and become captive to some one prevalent lust or other, *Gen. 39. 12.* for, while he saith, *that ye may be able to stand against his wiles,* he implyeth, that Satans aim is to drive us from our station: 8. The great work of a Christian, in relation to those wiles of Satan, is not to imitate him, by bending our wits to ensnare others to a sinfull course as he doth, *Matth. 16. 22, 23.* nor yet so much to know his wiles, to lay open the subtilty and deceit that is in them for the use of others, *Matth. 7. 22.* as to guard against them, and to keep our station notwithstanding of them, even when we are assaulted by them: for, saith Paul, *that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* 9. It is by the alone vertue of this armour of God, that is, the saving graces of God's Spirit, and the carefull exercise of those graces, that Christians are enabled to stand out against Satans wit and wiles. A piece of natural

tural courage and fixt resolutions, together with the deep engagement of credit and interest, may do much to make a man stand out against his avowed force and violence put forth by cruell persecuters; but there is no fence in flesh and blood against his wiles: for, he biddeth *put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

Verſ. 12. *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darknesse of this world, against spiritual wickednesse in high places.*

THE Apostle, having thus propounded the duty, doth next enforce it from the nature of this warfare, as being a *wrestling*, which is a close combate betwixt two, hand to hand, each exerting their whole force & strength against one another: And from the terror and greatness of those adversaries, whom we are to fight against, described, 1. negatively, or comparatively, that they were *not flesh and blood*, that is, any bodily or humane power, to wit, only, or principally; for, the Believer doth fight against those also, *Job. 16. 33.* only they are but Satans auxiliary forces, whom he stirreth up and imployeth. Next, positively, the devils and damned angels, described, first, from their magnifick titles, *principalities, powers, rulers of the darknesse of this world*: whereby is set forth their great naturall power and strength, together with their prince-like authority and government, which by Gods permission they exerce in the world, and upon wicked men in it by reason of their profanity and ignorance, here called *darknesse*, as chap. 5. ver. 8. Secondly, from their nature, as being for their essence *spiritual*, immaterial and without a body; and for quality, most wicked, and here called *wickednesse* it self in the abstract, thereby to aggreage their wickednesse, as being wholly destitute of all moral goodnesse. Thirdly, from the place of their abode, the high *air*, whereof Satan is prince, chap. 2. 2. Or rather, by this particle *in high places*, (as

many Interpreters conceive) he setteth forth somewhat more of the nature of this warfare, to wit, the main matter about which the quarrel is, even high and heavenly things, which tend to the honour of God, and the eternal good of our souls : for, the word in the original is, *in the heavenly*, without the substantive *places*, and it may be as well supplied *heavenly things*, as it is, *Heb. 8. 5. and 9. 23.* and so it readeth well *in*, or, *because of heavenly things*; for, this particle, rendered *in*, is sometimes causall, and rendered *because*. See *Matth. 26. 31.* Hence *Learn, 1.* The Lord doth deal ingenuously with all whom He calleth to fight this spiritual conflict, by letting them know the power, strength and subtilty of the enemy ; and the height of those difficulties which ly in their way to heaven before they engage, So that none may have occasion to say they were deceived, and made to meet with harder work than they were told of at the first : for, he setteth forth the nature of this warfare, and terror of the adversary to the utmost of what could be said by any, *We wrestle against principalities and powers, &c.* 2. So apt are men to dream of the way to heaven as easie, and to trouble themselves but little for attaining to it, *Matth. 7. 21.* that nothing lesse is required to make us shake off security, and minde the work of walking to heaven in earnest, than to set before us all those dreadfull dangers, insuperable difficulties, and terrible opposition, which of necessity we are to meet with in our way to it ; for, that they may be excited to shake off lazinesse and be serious in this work, he seeth it necessary to set before them what dreadfull enemies they had to fight against, as appeareth from the causal particle *for*, which coupleth this verse with the former; *Put on the whole armour of God, — for we wrestle against principalities and powers.* 3. The malice of Satan, our spiritual adversarie, is bent, not only against the Saints in general, but also against every one in particular, each of whom he setteth upon, with so much fury, force and eagernesse, as if he had none to deal with but one alone ; for, the Christians conflict

conflict with Satan, is here called a *wrestling*, which is a close combat betwixt two, hand to hand; and the original word signifieth such a strife as maketh the body shake again; *We wrestle*, saith he. 4. Every Saint and real Believer is this *one*, whom Satan so assaulteth: he forbeareth none, but setteth upon all; the strongest are not a terrour to him, nor yet the meanest are so far undervalued by him, as not to think them worthy of his wrath; and therefore all must fight and wrestle: for, the Apostle of purpose changeth the pronoun *ye*, in the former verse, into *we* in this, to shew that neither he nor any other was exempted from wrestling; *We wrestle*, saith he. 5. No place, no inward case, or outward condition wherein a Christian doth fall, can give him ease from, or a safe peace with, this restless adversary: his greatest safety is to be wrestling daily and without intermission; for, he saith not, *we did wrestle*, or shall wrestle, but in the present time, *we wrestle*: which implyeth a continued action. 6. Devils and damned evil spirits, are a more terrible and dangerous party to wrestle with than any bodily or humane power; yea, though all the skill, courage, valour, strength, which ever was amongst men, were united and placed in one, This dreadfull adversary, (for strength, for craft, for unwearied diligence, for unpeaceableness of spirit against his party, for his malice, not so much against our body and outward estate, as against our choicest part, even the immortal soul; for his courage to assault, his nimbleness to pursue, his immortal nature, that he never dieth) goeth far beyond the most terrible of men; yea, and all men: for, he extenuateth the power and terror of flesh and blood, being compared with Satans making the latter far more terrible than the former, while he saith, *we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers*. 7. As men in tempting us to sin directly or indirectly, are subservient to Satan, and in that respect acted by him, *Matth. 16. 23*. So, our surest way to guard against all such tentations, is to look at Satan as

our chief party, who maketh use of man one way or other, to promote his soul-ruining designs, and upon our ceding to the temptation, as a giving place to the devil, *Eph. 4. 27.* for, while he saith, *we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers*, he would have them to look at Satan as their chief adversary, even when they are tempted by men. 8. It is Satans constant work, not only to sin against the Lord himself; but to incite and tempt others to do the like, and envie and hinder that happinesse unto others which he hath irrecoverably fallen-from himself: and therefore such as are most active to entice others to sin and wickednesse, do resemble Satan most, and are to be looked upon, not as men; but incarnate devils. It is their fathers work they do, and his lusts they fulfill, *Job. 8. 44.* for, he maketh it Satans work to wrestle with the Saints and make them sin against the Lord; *We wrestle with principalities and powers.* 9. As there is not only one but many devils feighting under one head and chief, *Matth. 25. - 41.* So all of them are engaged in this spirituall warfare against the Saints; and therefore none of Christs souldiers should dream of ease, there being a sufficient number of enemies to engage all: yea, sometimes many devils do set upon one man at once, *Mark 5. 9.* for, all the stiles here given to Satan, are in the plurall number, to shew that they are a numerous enemy; *Principalities, powers, rulers, wickednesses.* 10. The people of God ought not to extenuate or undervalue the force and power of their adverse party in this spirituall conflict; but look upon them in their outmost strength, most numerous multitude, greatest activity, and in whatsoever may make them terrible: and this, not to weaken their own hands; but to awake them from their security, and to chase them to their strength: for, in order to this end, *Paul.* holdeth out their enemy Satan in his most dreadfull colours; *Principalities, powers, rulers of the darknesse of this world, spiritual wickednesses.* 11. Though Angels by their fall, have losed much, even all their morall

morall goodnesse, *Joh. 8. 44.* yet their essence and naturall being doth remain, yea, and such properties as do naturally flow from such an excellent being, as strength and ability to do, at Gods permission, whatsoever is not above the course of nature, (See upon chap. 2. ver. 2. doct. 8.) for which cause they are here called *powers*, yea, and what through Gods permission, their own usurpation, and the voluntary subjection of wicked men unto them, they exercise a prince-like authority over the children of disobedience: for, therefore are they called *principalities and rulers*. 12. Whatever prince-like authority Satan hath in the world, and whatever be his might and power to back his authority and make it dreadfull, he imployeth it all for carrying on this war against the Saints; his kingly power over wicked men is made use of for stirring them up sometimes to entice, *Gen. 39. 7.* sometimes to constrain the truly godly to sin against the Lord, *Dan. 3. 2, &c.* His power and might, whereby through Gods permission, he doth raise up storms, commove the elements, destroy cattel, smite the bodies of men with diverse diseases, is all imployed for this to make men, and especially good men, break out in some one or other sinfull carriage, *Job 1. 11.* with 14. and 2. 5. with 7. for, while the Apostle designeth our adversary by stiles of *principalities and powers*, he sheweth whatever authority or power Satan hath, is imployed by him for carrying on the war. 13. This prince-like authority and rule which Satan exerceth, is not absolute and illimited, but hath its own bounds appointed for it by God. As, first, his principality and rule is only in *this world*, but not in that which is to come, no not over the wicked, in whom he now ruleth, but there he and they both shall remain for ever close prisoners in hell, *Matth. 25. 41.* for, Christ is still to rule as Mediatour and Lord Deputy under the Father, untill He put down all rule, authority and power, and consequently Satan's among the rest, *1 Cor. 15. 24.* Hence it is they are called *rulers of this world*, that is,

now

now, and not hereafter. Next, his principality is limited only to those who are in their unrenewed state of darknesse, sin and ignorance of God. He may indeed exercise a tyrannical power over the Regenerate, but no princely authority, unto which they give unwilling obedience, there being still in such, a party for God, 1 *Job.* 3. 9. which in one degree or other opposeth it self, at least doth not consent to Satan's usurpation, *Rom.* 7. 19. *Gal.* 5. 17. for, he confineth their rule to *darknesse*, that is, those who are in a state of sin and ignorance; *rulers of the darknesse.* 14. Though Satan cannot so far prevail over the renewed man as to rule in him; yet, he ceaseth not to assault him, if it were but to vex him, *Rom.* 7. 24. yea, and he may so far prevail with his assaults by drawing him on to some particular grosse acts of sin, 2 *Sam.* 11. 4. and thereby to dishonour God, 2 *Sam.* 12. 14. and to mix his own peace, *Psal.* 32, 3, 4. as that the best of men have need to stand upon their guard against him: for, though the Apostle doth limit his principality and rule to unrenewed men, yet he maketh even that, an argument, why he himself and all the converted Ephesians were to stand to their arms against him: which implyeth, that at least he would assault them; yea, and might in part prevail against them: *for we wrestle against the rulers of the darknesse of this world.* 15. Natural excellency, greatness and dignity, are very consistent and often-times found to be stained with the greatest moral deformity; yea, and most excellent creatures, when they degenerate to wickednesse, do usually prove most perverse: for, those glorious creatures, whom he presently called *principalities and powers*, having fallen from God, became not only wicked, but wickednesse it self in the abstract; *Against spiritual wickedness.* 16. So base, so shamefull, so defiling a thing is sin, that it putteth a stain, a blot, a note of ignominy, upon the greatest of created excellencies, if once it get place; yea, the moe, and more choice excellencies that God hath adorned any person with, he proveth the more loathsome and abominable

nable to God, when he giveth loose reigns to wickedness; for, those princely excellent creatures, by reason of their sin, are branded with this ignominious stile, they are *spiritual wickednesse*. 17. It addeth much to the christian souldier his disadvantage in this spiritual conflict, that his grand and dreadfull enemy, the devil, is of a spiritual and immaterial substance: for, being a spirit, he is of vast understanding, and able to take up our natural inclination, and what temptation will be most prevalent with us, *Job* 12. 6. with *Mark* 14. 11. he is invisible both in his nature and approaches; he oft doth reach a deadly blow before we know it is he, *2 Sam.* 15. 11. he penetrateth all material substance, and cannot be keeped out by locked doors; yea, the external senses being closed, he worketh upon the inward fancy and imagination, *Mica.* 2. 1. he is unwearied in his motions, and never ceaseth to pursue his design, notwithstanding of growing difficulties and multiplied repulses, *Gen.* 39. 7. with *10.* 12. he hath a singular dexterity in driving us on to act spiritual sins, that is, either inward sins of the heart, or sins that are conversant, not about carnal passions and fleshly lusts, but spiritual objects, such as spiritual pride, error, unbelief, &c. these being more like to his own spiritual substance: for, he setteth him forth in his spiritual nature, to make him more dreadfull, as also (according to the judgment of some Interpreters) to hint at the kind of those tentations, which with greatest dexterity and vigour he assaulteth the Saints with most, even to spiritual sins, *against spiritual wickednesse*, or the *spirituals of wickednesse*, as it is in the original. 18. The malice of Satan doth bend it self against the Christian souldier, not so much in his temporall and worldly, as in his spiritual and heavenly concernments; and whatever he doth to the Christian's hurt and prejudice in the former, it is that he may hereby reach him a blow in the latter, *Job* 1. 11. for, Paul doth shew the matter about which the quarrel is betwixt Satan and us, to be things heavenly, not earthly; in high places, better, because of heavenly things.

19. No worldly concernment or hazard, ought to go so near us, as that which concerneth the eternal good and salvation of our souls, the hazard of losing those concernments will startle a Christian souldier much, as knowing it can profit him nothing to gain the whole world, if he lose his soul: for, to make them take the alarm with greater speed, he sheweth it was not things earthly, but heavenly, which Satan intended to spoile them of; *For we wrestle—for heavenly things*, Therefore put on the whole armour of God, as it is, ver. 11.

Verf. 13. *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.*

HE doth here first repeat the former exhortation with some small variation, as a conclusion following upon the former reason, while he commandeth them to *take unto them this whole armour*, and for the end formerly mentioned, even *that they might be able to withstand* and resist the enemy, as it were, face to face, foot to foot, hand to hand, and this chiefly in *the evil day*; whereby is meant not only the whole time of our life, which is full of tentations, and therefore in that respect, evil, but also and chiefly some circumstantial time wherein tentations were to abound, chiefly the time of death, not excluding, but rather probably including that time which was foretold by Paul himself, *Acts 20. 29, 30.* Next, he enlargeth this end, which was to be attained by their putting on, and making use of their armour, not only to their withstanding at the first onset, and during the time of the fight; but also to their standing after the victory, and after they have done all, or overcome all: where by *standing*, as it is distinguished from *withstanding*, presently mentioned, must be meant the posture not of a souldier, but of a conquerour, who useth to stand when the conquered are thrown upon the ground, *Psal. 20. 8.* Hence Learn, 1. The dreadfull

opposition which the Christian souldier must meet with in the way to heaven, should not discourage or make him heartlesse, but only incite him to shake off security and laziness, and to prepare himself for the day of battell: for, from what he hath said, ver. 12. of their terrible adversaries, he inferreth here, *wherefore take unto you the whole armour.* 2. As our serious fore-casting and thinking upon, together with our preparing our selves accordingly for, this christian conflict, is a necessary duty; So, such is our love to carnal ease and security, *Prov. 6. 9. 10.* that we are not easily excited to this duty; one alarm will not do it: for, therefore doth he give them a second, almost in the same words; *wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God.* 3. The graces of Gods Spirit, by which the soul is compleatly armed for this spirituall conflict, are not of our own making or procuring, but being made to our hand by God, we have them for the taking: for, he calleth them the whole armour of God, and biddeth the Ephesians only take them; *take unto you the whole armour of God.* 4. As this spiritual armour, or the saving graces of Gods Spirit, being once put on, may, though not altogether, *1 Job. 3. 9.* yet in a great part, be wrung or wyled from us by the power and sleight of Sathan, our dreadfull adversary, So we are not in that case to quit the field, and yeeld the cause: but by renewing our faith, repentance and former diligence in the use of meanes, *Rev. 2. 5.* to take them to us again. Neither are they ever so far lost, but they may be recovered, our great Generall being alwayes at hand to renew our strength, to make us mount up and not be weary, *Isai. 40. 29--31.* for, the word rendered, *take unto you*, signifieth to *take again*, or recover that which we have lost or let go. 5. As our spiritual adversaries in this Christian conflict are most fierce pursuers, when ever we give them ground; so we are not to expect any truce or quarter from them, but must stand to it, and fight it out, placing all our safety in a couragious resistance, avowed defiance, and none

none at all in base running, or cowardly ceding, or politick compliance: for, the Apostle will have all their thoughts taken up how to *withstand*, which implyeth a furious charge and fierce pursuit upon the part of enemies, and an avowed defiance with courageous resistance upon ours: *that we may be able to withstand.*

6. What ever be the terrour and strength of our spiritual adversaries, and the weakness and inability of men, destitute of the saving graces of Gods Spirit, to resist the meanest of Sathans onsets, *2 Tim. 2. -- 26.* yet of such excellent vertue is this whole armour of God, or those Christian graces wrought in us by the Spirit of God, that when the soul is once endued with them, and attaineth to the dexterous use and exercise of them, the weakest of saints, will be enabled to receive, without losing ground, the most furious of Sathans assaults: for, it is promised unto them all, even the meanest of them, if they will put on the whole armour of God, *they shall be able to withstand.*

7. As there are some evil dayes by reason of tentations and trouble, awaiting Christians, and some of those unavoidable by any, namely the day of death, *Heb. 9. 27.* So, we ought to be fore-arming and preparing for such dayes before they come, and with Christian courage resist those violent tentations arising from them when they come, as knowing we are chiefly then called and singled out to give proof of the reality of Gods grace in us, *Eph. 5. 16.* for, he forewarneth of an ill day approaching, and will have them to arme themselves before it come; *Take to you the whole armour -- and to withstand in the evil day.*

8. There can no such evil day befall a Christian, but through help of this spirituall armour, and the kindly exercise of saving graces, he may ride out the storm, and arrive with safety at the wished harbour when it is over and gone, chiefly if trial and trouble find him ready armed, and at his duty: for, if they will take to them before-hand this armour of God, he promiseth *they shall be able to withstand in the evil day.*

9. It is a singular encouragement to the

the Christian souldier, that the time of his hottest conflict with afflictions, tentations, and the devil their leader, lasteth not long; it is but a day, an hour, *Rev. 3. 10.* a short season, *1 Pet. 1. 6.* yea, but a moment, compared with eternity, *2 Cor. 4. 17.* for, in order to their encouragement, he calleth the time of their feighting but a day; *To withstand in the evil day.* 10. The Christian souldier in this spirituall warfare, will meet with many assaults before he obtain a compleat victory, there must be variety of conflicts, exercises and tentations, so that usually his coming out of one, is but an enterance into another: the malice of the adversary is unsatiable, his hopes are never quite gone, but what he misseth at one time and one assault, he hopeth to acquire at another, *Job 2. 4, 5.* for, he saith they must first *do all*, or *overcome all*: which implyeth there are many things to be overcome before they stand as conquerours. 11. It is not enough that the Christian souldier doth once engage in this spirituall warfare, and carry himself courageously in withstanding some few of Satans assaults, and afterwards fall back, and lay down his armes; but he must of necessity endure to the end, and untill he receive the very last of Satans assaults and overcome them all, if so he expect to stand as conquerour after the feight: for, saith he, *and having done or overcome*, not only some few assaults, but all; *To stand.* 12. It is only this armour of God, those saving graces of His Spirit, and no common gifts or fair flourish of temporaries and hypocrits, which will enable a Christian to feight all the battels that must be stricken before the compleat victory: for, only if they take this armour, he sheweth *they shall do*, or *overcome all.* 13. How many soever the Christian's conflicts be, yet if he take unto him, and use this armour aright, he shall come through all, and stand victorious after all. Christ our generall, in whose victory we have interest, hath overcome all, *Job. 16. 33.* He is engaged in this battell, and feighteth with us, *Philip. 4. 13.* yea, and prayeth for us, *Luke 22. 32.* Be-

sides,

sides, none can pluck the Believer out of His hand, because the Father and He is stronger than they, *Joh. 10. 29.* and consequently, the field cannot be lost, the fighting souldier must one day be a triumphing conquerour: for, upon their taking to them this armour, it is promised, that *having done all, they shall stand*, to wit, as conquerours.

Verf. 14. *Stand therefore, having your loyns girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.*

THe Apostle, in the second branch of this second part of the Chapter, (having again exhorted them to stand to it as valourous souldiers by carrying themselves watchfully and orderly in all the duties of their generall and particular station) giveth an inventour of the severall pieces of this armour, both offensive and defensive, exhorting the Christian souldier to put on, and make use of, each of them; and reckoneth forth all the pieces of compleat bodily armour wherewith souldiers used of old to arm their bodies from head to foot, and assigneth some one or other of the graces of Gods Spirit, answerable to every one of those, for arming the spirit.

Concerning which, know, 1. in generall, that there is no piece of armour here fitted for the back parts, because there is no escaping by flight in this spirituall warfare, *Jam. 4. 7. Heb. 10. 38.* Secondly, that we must not so precisely distinguish the severall pieces, as to think that one may not serve for the use of another: for, faith which answereth to the shield here, (See ver. 16) is called the breast-plate, 1 *Cor. 5. 8.* And yet, thirdly, as shall be made clear in the particulars, there is some resemblance between every grace, and that piece of the bodily armour, to which it is here compared.

In this verse, are two pieces of this armour, the first is *truth*: not the truth of doctrine, which is included under the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God; but the grace

grace of truth. or sincerity, whereby a man endeavoureth to be that really, both unto God and man, for which he giveth himself out, 1 *Job.* 3. 18. and giveth himself out for that to both, for which the word of truth doth call upon him, *Psal.* 119. 1. which grace of sincerity goeth frequently under the name of *truth*, *Psal.* 51. 6. *Job.* 4. 24. Now, he biddeth them have *their loyns girt about* with this grace; and so sheweth, it doth answer that piece of the bodily armour which was called the girdle, and was a broad belt, wherewith souldiers were girt about the middle, and did serve both for ornament, as being set with drops of brasse or silver, and hiding the gap and want between the other pieces of the armour in that place; and also for safety and defence, as keeping all the rest of the armour fast, guarding the belly and strengthening the loyns. In like manner, this grace of sincerity, is the Christians ornament, *Job.* 1. 47. covereth many other wants, *Gen.* 20. 6. is a necessary ingredient in all other graces, without which they are but counterseit shadows, *Prov.* 15. 8. and addeth strength and courage to the heart in the day of sore trial, *Job.* 27. 5. 6. The second piece of armour is *righteousnesse*: not the imputed righteousness of Christ, which seemeth to be included under the buckler of faith; but the inherent righteousness of an holy conversation, whereby we are enclined, and do accordingly endeavour, to give both to God and man their due and right, *Acts.* 24. 16. according to both the Tables of the Commands, *Luke.* 1. 6. and it answereth that piece of the bodily armour, which was called the breast-plate, whereby the breast and vitall parts therein contained were secured: In like manner, this grace of righteousness doth guard the vitall parts of the soul; and that wherein the life of a Christian doth consist, to wit, the root and seed of inherent grace in the heart, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. and the faith of his interest in God: for, righteous walking is an evidence of interest, 1 *Job.* 2. 3. Hence *Learn*, 1. None shall after death stand as victorious over all their spirituall enemies,

but such as here do stand as souldiers in a military posture. They must stand as watchmen, *Hab. 2. 1.* to observe and take up their enemies motions and approaches, *1 Pet. 5. 8.* and they must stand as fighters, to resist and withstand all his furious assaults, *1 Pet. 5. 9.* otherwise, they shall never stand as conquerours: for, having spoken (ver. 13.) of their standing as conquerours at death, he exhorteth them in order to their standing, that they would here stand as souldiers; *Stand therefore.* 2. Assurance, and certainty of through bearing and victory over all our spirituall adversaries, is so far from being in its own nature a pillow to foster security and carnall ease, that it addeth courage and spirit to those who have it, and rendereth them so much the more watchfull, active and diligent: yea, and nothing weakeneth more the hands of a christian souldier, than diffidence and distrust of successe: for, from what he promised, ver. 13. that they should stand as conquerours, he encourageth them here to stand in the conflict; *Stand therefore.* 3. Whenever a man doth engage to fight under Christs banner, and betaketh himself to his military posture, he may expect a present charge, and to be set upon without delay by his spirituall adversaries: for, no sooner doth he bid them stand, but with the same breath he commandeth them to put on their armour, and be in readinesse to receive a present assault; *Stand therefore, having your loynes girt about.* 4. The Spirit of God, speaking in Scripture, doth usually set out most heavenly and spirituall purposes, by similitudes taken from things earthly, and such as do occur in our ordinary imployments, hereby teaching us so to converse among, and look upon things earthly, as to gather some spirituall lessons from them: for, the Apostle doth here resemble every piece of the souldiers armour, to some answerable Christian grace; *Having your loynes girt about with truth.* 5. The grace of truth and sincerity, is a necessary piece of the Christians armour, without the which we cannot choose but be exposed

exposed and laid open to severall deadly blows, and dangerous tentations from our spirituall adversary; without sincerity we are easily driven to dissemble both with God, (*Psal.* 78. 36, 37.) and man, *Psal.* 55. 21. to go about choicest duties for base and by-ends, *Matth.* 6. 2. *Phil.* 1. 16. to curtell our obedience, astringing it to some commanded duties only, neglecting others, *Mark* 6. 17. with 20. yea, and to despare of mercy, or of doing better in time coming, when Satan shall accuse and challenge us for our base hypocrisie in time bypast, to which he himself did tempt us, *Matth.* 27. 4. 5. for, the Apostle commandeth the Christian souldier to arm himself with truth and sincerity: *Having your loyns girt about with truth.* 6. Though Satans chief arms, whereby he fighteth in this spirituall conflict, are deceitfull wiles and subtile snares, (See ver. 11.) yet, the Christian souldier must not endeavour to overcome him with his own weapons, but ought to be sincere and streight; he must not lie, no not for God, *Job* 13. 7, 8. neither think to out-wit his adversary by yeelding a little, and falling back one step, of purpose to advance two for it, or to capitulate with him by yeelding to one sin at one time, upon condition to give way unto none other, or not to the same afterwards, which, at the best, is to do evil, that good may come, which is condemned, *Rom.* 3. -8. and is inconsistent with true sincerity and plain dealing, which is here enjoyned to the Christian souldier; *Having your loyns girt about with truth.* 7. The grace of righteousness, or an honest fixed purpose and earnest endeavour to obey God in all His commands, is another necessary piece of a Christians armour, without which we are exposed and laid open to severall deadly blows and dangerous tentations from our spirituall adversary, even such as question our interest in God, and brangle our peace with Him, *Isa.* 32. 17. without this purpose and endeavour, we are easily driven to break all, or any of Gods commands, *Prov.* 11. 5. and 13. 6. and more particularly, to take a sinfull course for our

own vindication under unjust reproaches, *Isa. 51. 7.* to distrust the providence of God, under straits, *Gen. 30. 33.* and to make a soul retreat in the day of trial, *Prov. 28. 1.* for, the Apostle commandeth the Christian souldier to arm himself with righteousness; *And having the breast-plate of righteousness.* 8. It is not enough for a Christian souldier to propose unto himself a good and approved end, and to be sincere and streight in aiming at the end proposed; but he must make use of good and approved means, consisting in conscientious practice of all commanded duties, both to God and man: for, with sincerity and *truth*, which relateth chiefly to the scope and end proposed in our actions, he enjoyneth the practice of *righteousnesse*, which giveth to both God and man their right and due.

Vers. 15. And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

THe third piece of armour here enjoined to be put on, is, *the preparation of the Gospel of peace*, that is, a prepared and resolute frame of heart to go through our Christian course with chearfulness and patience, notwithstanding of all the difficulties of the way (for, the word rendered *preparation*, is used elsewhere for such firmnesse of resolution, *Acts 21. 13.*) which resolute frame of heart, is wrought and begotten by the Doctrine of the Gospel, in so far as it is the mean of making peace and friendship between God and sinners: and therefore is this piece of armour called *the preparation of the Gospel of peace*. Now, he biddeth them have their *feet shod* with this *preparation*; and thereby sheweth it doth answer that part of the bodily armour which is called the leg or foot-harnesse, which did serve to defend the legs and feet of souldiers against cold, thornes, stones, and other roughnesse of the way. In like manner, this prepared resolute frame of heart to charge through all difficulties, doth not only guard the soul against the
pollution

pollution of filthy tentations which it doth meet with in the way, *Psal.* 119. 105. but also engageth the Christian souldier to go through all the crosses, hardships and difficulties of the way with courage and chearfulness. *Doct.* 1. The Christian souldier is so to stand in the fight, as that he be also daily advancing and marching forwards in his way towards heaven. His duty is both to stand and to advance at once in severall respects: he is to withstand and stand against his spirituall adversary; and yet to advance and make progresse towards Christ, perfection in grace, and his journeyes end: yea, and the more firmly he stand against the one, he advanceth with greater speed towards the other: for, the Apostle, having exhorted them to stand, ver. 14. he insinuateth here, that they must be also advancing, while he biddeth them put on the foot or leg-harnesse of resolution: which piece of armour was usefull for souldiers chiefly when they were upon their march; *And your feet shod.* 2. The way wherein the Christian souldier is to march and advance towards heaven, is not plain and smooth, or free from trouble and hazard, but beset with tentations and afflictions, as with so many sharp stones, piercing briars and thorns, which make a way impassible to bare-footed travellers; for, there was no need of the foot-harnesse, to which he here alludeth, but in such a way; *And your feet shod.* 3. The Christian souldier therefore must arm himself with a firm and well grounded resolution and purpose of heart, to charge through all difficulties, how dear soever it may cost him; this being another necessary piece of the Christians armour, without the which we are exposed and laid open to severall deadly blows and dangerous tentations from our spirituall advertary, even all such as unexpected difficulties and crosses do easily and usually drive an unprepared heart to yeeld unto, to wit, impatience, *Gen.* 30. 1. repining against the Lord, *Jonah* 4. 9. a spirit of revenge against instruments, *2 Sam.* 16. 9. fainting in duty, *Heb.* 12. 12. closing with sinfull

means for attaining an outgate, *1 Sam.* 28. 7. despare of an outgate, *1 Sam.* 27. 1, questioning an interest in God because of the crosse, *Judg.* 6. 13. and such like: for, the Apostle commandeth the Christian souldier to arm himself with such a prepared and resolute frame of heart; *And your feet shod with the preparation.* 4. It is not every resolution and purpose which will guard the heart against these fore-mentioned blows and tentations, but such as floweth from the glad-tidings and intimation of peace and friendship made up between God and us, all our other resolutions will be at length outwearied and broken by continuall crosses and hardships, *Isa.* 40. 30. but the Christian, who is armed with this, endureth to the end, as knowing God is his friend, *Psal.* 23. 4. there is not wrath in his cup, *Isa.* 53. 5. his wearisome journey will at last have an happy close, *Heb.* 4. 9. for, the Apostle commandeth them to put on such a prepared frame of heart as floweth from the intimation of their peace with God, while he calleth it *the preparation of the Gospel of peace.* 5. The Gospel is only that Doctrine which bringeth peace between God and rebels, the Law indeed discovereth the seed, *Rom.* 3. -20. but the Gospel doth not only shew, that peace and friendship may be had, *Luke* 2. 14. but also the tearms upon which it is obtained, *Rom.* 5. 1. yea, and by means of the preaching thereof, the Lord doth work us up to imbrace these tearms, *Rom.* 10. 14, 15, 17. for, he ascribeth the making up of our peace with God to the Gospel, while he calleth it *the Gospel of peace.* 6. Where the Gospel is blessed of God, for making up of friendship and peace, it will be attended in all to whom it is so blessed, with a firm and stedfast resolution to follow God in the way of duty, notwithstanding of all difficulties and hardships: for, he maketh their putting on this prepared frame of heart, to be the native result of peace made with God by means of the Gospel, while he saith, *Having your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.*

Verf. 16. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

THE fourth piece of armour, the putting-on and use-making whereof, is recommended to them above all the rest, is the grace of *faith*, by which we believe the truth of Gods Word in general, *Act. 24. 14.* and in a special manner do receive (*Joh. 1. 12.*) and rest upon Christ (*Isa. 26. 3.*) for grace here, (*Philip. 4. 13.*) and glory hereafter, *1 Tim. 1. -16.* as He is offered in the Gospel, *Gal. 2. 16.* And it answereth that part of the bodily armour, called the *shield*, which was a broad and large piece, made of some strong mettall, and, being made use of by a skilfull hand, did defend the whole body, supply the weaknesse of any other part of the armour, and guard against all sort of stroaks from the enemy. In like manner, faith is a grace of so large extent that it reacheth help to the soul in all its severall cases, *Habak. 2. -4.* it strengtheneth and supplyeth the inlacks of all other graces, *Act. 15. -9.* yea, and guardeth against tentations of all sorts, *Mark 9. 23.* but more particularly, as the Apostle doth here expresse, it quencheth these of Satan, that wicked one his tentations, which are called *fiery darts*, that is, violent and piercing tentations, whereby the soul is inflamed with a vehement heat, whether of boyling lusts, or raging despair: and faith doth not only repell some of those tentations before they seize upon the soul; but also quench and extinguish that heat, pain and horror which boyleth in the soul, being wounded by these: All which the grace of faith effectuateth, not by its own strength or force, but through the vertue of Christ whom it doth apprehend, whose power and merit, imployed by faith, doth allay and quench all that heat, whether of inflaming lusts, or of boyling impatience, horror and despair, which those tentations do kindle in the heart wherein they light

nd are entertained. Hence *Learn*, 1. Though the Lords Ministers ought to make known unto His People the whole counsel of God, *Act. 20. 27.* there being no truth revealed in Scripture, the knowledge whereof is not usefull either for the being or well-being, for the necessary food or ornament of a Christian, *2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.* yet they are most to inculcate and presse upon peoples consciences the knowledge and practice of most necessary and weighty truths, chiefly those which are fundamental and of daily use and practice: for, the Apostle, in pressing the use of the spiritual armour, doth wisely recommend one piece, of special and daily use, above all the rest, while he saith, *Above all, taking the shield of faith.*

2. The grace of faith is another necessary piece of a Christians armour, without the which we are destitute of Christs imputed righteousness, *Philip. 3. 9.* and so exposed to the dint of sin-pursuing justice, *Job. 3. 36.* and to all the bitter accusations and challenges of the devil our adversary, *Rom. 8. 33.* We are destitute also of Christs covenanted strength, which is communicated and engaged for our through-bearing in all our spiritual conflicts only when it is laid hold upon by an act of faith, *Job. 15. 4, 5.* and consequently, without the exercise of that grace, we are exposed as a prey to every temptation, and especially to Satans fiery darts, here spoken of in the text, seeing in that case we have no strength to resist them but our own, which indeed is none, *Job. 15. 35.* for, the Apostle commandeth the Christian souldier to arm himself with this grace; *Above all taking the shield of faith.* 3. This grace of faith is the most excellent and necessary piece of all the Christians armour, in so far as faith (though weak and imperfect in it self, *Luke 17. 5.* yet) laying hold on the promise, it engageth the almighty power of God and Christ to be for us, *Matth. 15. 28.* it giveth life, being and vigour to the other pieces of this armour, even to all the sanctifying graces of Gods Spirit, *Acts 15. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 5.* it maketh up all imperfections by covering them with Christs most

most perfect righteousness, *Philip. 3. 9.* and so defendeth them against the furious or subtil assaults of Satan, whereby he endeavoureth to make us question their reality, and throw them away as counterfeit, hypocritical and uselesse, *Lam. 3. 18.* it bringeth a fresh supply of strength to the rest from Jesus Christ when they are weakened, wounded, and almost rendred unprofitable, *Isa. 40. 31.* yea, it alone doth sometimes keep the Believer from total fainting and quitting all, when the rest are shattered, brangled, disappear, and for the time are uselesse, *Job 13. 15.* for, the Apostle recommendeth this piece above all the rest, while he saith, *Above all, take the shield of faith.* 4. As Satans great design is to wrest and wring this piece of our armour from us, and that because of its excellency and usefulness, yea, and often doth prevail to mar our use-making of it; So it would be our chiefest care to keep this grace of faith in daily exercise, and without delay to return to the exercise of it, when we have fallen from it: for, the word, rendred *taking*, signifieth to take again that which we have lost or let go; *Above all, taking the shield of faith.* 5. It is the Christian's dury to study the excellency and usefulness of any grace, and especially of faith, that thereby he may be incited to seek after it, and to make use of it; we must first put a price upon grace, before we be at any pains for it: for, that he may incite them to make use of faith, he informeth them of its excellency and usefulness, while he saith, *wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts.* 6. Though the devils and fallen angels be many, (See ver. 12.) yet so united are they in wickednesse and in carrying-on their wofull work under one chief head and prince, *Matth. 12. 24, 26.* as if they were but only one: for, therefore doth he speak of the devil as of one; *the fiery darts of the wicked.* 7. As Satan, that wicked one, his great work and businesse is to draw and drive others to sin and wickednesse; So, he hath several sorts of tentations which he maketh use of for that end, according to the diversity of sins

to which he tempteth, and the different tempers and dispositions of those whom he tempteth: he hath not only subtil wiles and stratagems, spoken of, ver. 11. but also fiery darts, whether of violent boyling lusts, or raging despair, which he throweth afar off, and indiscernably with great force and violence, wherein they resemble darts; *All the fiery darts of the wicked.* 8. Among all the tentations which Satan maketh use of to carry on his wofull work, his fiery darts are most hard to be resisted, and, where given way to, most dangerous, in so far as they give a double hurt and dammage, even as materiall fiery darts do both wound and burn; so those tentations being entertained, do not only defile the soul with guilt, but also disturb and disquiet it with their force and violence, *Hos. 7. 4.* or, vex, perplex and put it to pain with that anxiety and horreur which they breed in it, *Gen. 4. 13.* for, he commendeth faith above all the rest, from its quenching those tentations, which implyeth, that they are both hardly resistible, and most dangerous; *wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.* 9. The grace of faith, though never so well exercised, cannot hinder Satan to throw those fiery piercing tentations, nor yet doth it alwayes repel them, but sometimes they pierce even the Believers soul, where, finding suitable fuel, they raise a burning flame, and make great vastation and havock: for, while he saith, faith doth quench them, it is implied, they will be sometimes boyling and burning within; *ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts.* 10. The grace of faith not only supplyeth the place of armour to ward off blows; but is also medicinall to cure those dangerous wounds, which the soul receiveth in this spirituall conflict through the prevalency of tentations, and the negligent use-making of our other graces, it is both defending and healing armour: for, thereby *we are able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.* 11. There is no spirituall disease or wound so desperate, no sin so prevalent in the soul, but the grace

grace of faith, rightly made use of in laying hold on the merit and vertue of Christs death, is sufficient to cure it and destroy it; yea, and to cure not only one disease, but many: for, he attributeth a vertue to it, to quench fiery darts; and all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Verse 17. *And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

IN this verse are contained the fifth and sixth pieces of the spiritual armour which he will have them to take and make use of. The fifth is *salvation*, or the hope of salvation, the thing hoped for, being put for *hope*, as the Apostle explaineth himself, *1 Thes. 5. --8.* which hope, is a grace, whereby we patiently expect salvation, both temporal (*Psal. 62. 1.*) and eternal, *Titus 1. 2.* but chiefly the latter, according to the promise apprehended by faith, and it answereth the part of the bodily armour called the *helmet*, or head-piece, which being the highest piece of all the rest, did defend the head and face, and was so composed as to make the souldier of dreadfull appearance unto his enemies. In like manner this grace of wel-grounded hope doth lift the heart upwards, *Psal. 16. 9.* keepeth the head safe and above water, so that the Christian sinketh not, *2 Cor. 4. 16. Rom. 5. 3. 4.* and bringeth him to so high a pitch of Christian courage as maketh him formidable to his adversary, *1 Sam. 17. 45, 46.* The sixth piece of armour is the written *Word of God*, which answereth that part of the bodily armour called the *sword*, whereby the souldier useth both to defend himself and wound the enemy. In like manner the Word of God, laid up in the heart, and made use of pertinently by the Christian souldier, hath somewhat in it to ward off the blow of every temptation, *Matth. 4. 4, 7, 10.* and maketh Satan retire as one ashamed and wounded, *Matth. 4. 10, 11.* and it is here called *the sword of the Spirit*, because the Spirit of God hath revealed this Word, *2 Pet. 1. 21*, it worketh powerfully upon the

the spirits of men, *Heb.* 4. 12. and its efficacy in working dependeth on the Spirit, *2 Cor.* 10. 4. *Dock.* 1. Though believers have heaven and salvation already in right and by promise, *Joh.* 3. 36--: yet, the Lord, for good and wise reasons, seeth it necessary to delay the performance, and not to give them present possession upon their right: for, if there were present possession given, there would be no need of this grace of hope, whereby the believer doth patiently expect salvation promised; *and take the helmet of salvation, or of the hope of salvation.* 2 The sincere believer, during the time of the not performance of promised salvation, may cast his account to meet with many sore assaults, and sad strokes from manifold tentations upon all hands: for, what need of an helmet, if there be not appearance of blows? *and take the helmet of salvation.* 3. A wel-grounded hope of salvation, according to the promise, is another necessary piece of the Christians armour, without the which he is deprived of one strong motive and encouragement to the work of sanctification in generall, *1 Joh.* 3. 3. exposed and laid open to several deadly blows and dangerous tentations from Satan, and more especially, to immoderate grief for the death of near relations, *1 Thes.* 4. 13. to the evil of covetousness and of placing our portion and happiness in this life, as knowing nothing of a better, *Psal.* 17. 14. with 15. to the evils of fainting, discouragement and dispaire, arising from delayed performance of what is promised, *Prov.* 13. 12. from hard sufferings and persecutions for the Gospel, *2 Cor.* 4. 16. with 18. and from the fear of approaching death, the king of terrours, *Prov.* 14. 32. for, the Apostle commandeth the Christian souldier to arm himself with this grace of hope; *and take the helmet of salvation.* 4. Though this saving grace of hope be stronger and weaker in several Christians, according as it hath more or less of a mixture of contrary diffidence, *Rom.* 4. 18. and though the meanest degree of hope doth serve for good purpose to defend the Christian in some measure against the
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forementioned tentations, *Rom. 5. 5--.* yet it is the Christian souldier's duty, in order to his better guarding against those deadly blows, to aim at no less than a full assurance of hope, even such as maketh him no less diffident to obtain salvation promised, than if he had it in hand: for, it seemeth the Apostle expresseth the grace of hope by salvation, the object of it, to shew their hope should be as much fixed as if they had salvation it self already in possession; *and take the helmet of salvation.* 5. The Christian souldier is not alwayes and only to be upon the defending hand, nor to think it enough to keep his sinfull evils from prevailing further and growing stronger: but he must also endeavour to pursue them, weaken them, and not to think himself exonerated untill he fully subdue them: for, the Spirit of God injoyneth the Christian souldier to make use, not only of defensive armour to guard himself; but of offensive also, to pursue and kill the enemy; of which sort is the sword in bodily wars; *and the sword of the Spirit.* 6. Acquaintance with the Lords written Word, together with a dexterous usemaking of it, is another necessary piece of the Christian his armour, without the which he cannot choose but be exposed to several dangerous blows and deadly tentations, seeing he can neither know sin to be sin, *Rom. 7. 7.* nor the right way of resisting sin, or of discharging duty, *Psal. 119. 9.* and bearing afflictions with Christian courage and patience, *Matth. 5. 39.* but by the word; besides, that the timous calling to mind of a word in Scripture, forbidding and threatening such an evil, pressing the practice of such a duty, and speaking encouragement and comfort to the soul exercised with such a cross, is often blessed of God, to break the strength of the temptation which inciteth to it, *Matth. 4. 10, 11.* to furnish the heart with resolution and strength for duty, *Psal. 119.--50.* and with Christian courage under the cross, *Psal. 119. 92.* for, he commandeth the Christian souldier to arm himself with the knowledge of, and acquaintance with, the

the Word of God ; and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. 7. As it is the only vertue and power of Gods Spirit, which enliveneth the Word, and maketh it effectual ; So it is only the Word of God, and no humane inventions, or magical charmes, with which the Spirit of God doth joyn His power and efficacy to resist and drive away the devil ; for, therefore he calleth the Word the sword of the Spirit. and expoundeth it to be no other word, but the Word of God.

Verse 18. *Praying alwayes with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance, and supplication for all saints.*

HERE is a seventh piece of this armour, or rather a duty, the practizing whereof is enjoined by God as a mean for obtaining all those forementioned pieces of the spiritual armour from Him, together with the right use-making of them against the enemy, and the Lords successfull blessing thereupon. This mean is the duty of prayer, whereby we offer up our desires to God, *Psal.* 62. 8. for things agreeable to His will, 1 *Job.* 5. 14. in the name of Christ, *Job.* 16. 23. with confession of our sins, *Psal.* 32. 5, 6. and thankfull acknowledgement of His mercies, *Philip.* 4. 6. Which duty is enjoined, not simply, but with six necessary qualifications, the opening up whereof, doth serve for so many doctines. As, 1. we must pray alwayes, which is not to be understood as if we were to do nothing else but pray ; but the phrase implyeth frequency in this duty, and at all times, when opportunity offers, (the original word will bear so much) together with an endeavour to keep our hearts daily in a praying temper, that when God offereth occasion, we may not want a futable frame and disposition. 2. We must use all kinds of prayer, two whereof are here exprest, first, *prayer*, strictly taken, whereby we seek these good things which we want from God. Next, *supplication*, whereby we deprecate evils
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and judgements whether felt or feared. 3. Our prayers and supplications must be in *the spirit*, as not being a work of the lip, tongue and memory only; but of the heart and inward man, *Matth.* 15. 8. being stirred up and assisted by the Spirit of God, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. 4. The exercise of prayer must be joyned with *watchfulness*, a watchfulness especially of the mind. See upon *Col.* 4. verse 2. doct. 3. 5. It must be with most importunate perseverance, called here *all perseverance*, implying, that we are not to break off begun diligence in the practice of this duty, *Luke* 18. 1. yea, and are to reiterate our petitions for one and the same thing, so oft as occasion offereth, untill it be granted, *2 Cor.* 12. 8. a seeming repulse or deniall. making us more vehement, *Luke* 18. 5. *Matth.* 15. 22. &c. Lastly, it must be extended unto others besides our selves, which others are first expressed more generally in this verse, to wit, *all saints*, that is, all these, who, having given up their name to Christ, are standing Church-members, and especially those who have more convincing evidences of saving grace than others. See upon *Philip.* 4. verse 21. doct. 2. Which is not to be understood, as if we were to pray for none but such: we ought to exclude none from our prayers who are in a capacity to be bettered by them, *1 Job.* 5. 16. no not our very enemies, *Matth.* 5. 44. only the saints are to have the chief room, both in our hearts, and also in our prayers, as in all other duties flowing from Christian charity, *Gal.* 5. ver. 10. Hence *Learn* further, 1. The Christian souldier doth never receive so much from God, while he is upon earth, as to stand in need of no more; he needeth alwayes more grace to preserve and improve what is already bestowed, *1 Pet.* 1. 5. and to supply emergent necessities and wants, whereof while he breatheth there will be alwayes some new discoveries made, *2 Cor.* 12. 7. with 9. for, notwithstanding of this compleat armour given them by God, he will have them yet to be alwayes praying and seeking more; *praying alwayes*, saith he. 2. This whole and com-

compleat armour of God can do no good to the Christian souldier, either to defend himself, or to offend his adversary, without the Lords special assistance, and concurrence, whereby he actuateth those graces, and without the which, habitual grace could never be improved or made use of by us to any good purpose, *Philip. 2. 13.* for, therefore he directeth them, having put on this armour, to make their recourse to God by prayer for obtaining His special assistance to improve it aright; *praying alwayes.* 3. The exercise of prayer is most necessary to be made conscience of by the Christian souldier, as that, by which he obtaineth all his other armour from God, *Ezek. 36. 26.* with 37. together with special assistance to improve it, and apply it to work, as said is: hereby also he doth recover his armour when it is in a good part lost, *Psal. 51. 10.* fourbish, sharpen and make it clear, when it is eaten and consumed with the rust of security, deadness and hardness of heart, *Isai. 63. 17.* and by diligent prayer, Satans assaults and tentations are either kept off, and diverted, so that the other armour getteth not much a doe, *Matth. 26. 41. Luke 21. 36.* or otherwise vigorously resisted; and the other armour, the severall graces of Gods Spirit, made thereby temptation-proof, *Luke 22. 32.* In a word, prayer is the soules swift and trusty messenger to God, for receiving new orders, new strength, and all things the Christian souldier needeth, either before, after, or in time of fight, and never returneth empty without an answer, *Job. 16. 23.* for, he injoyneth the exercise of prayer as most necessary to the Christian souldier; *praying alwayes.* 4. As the Christian souldier is never fully freed from all his straits, necessities and wants; So he ought to live in the daily sense of his own emptiness, and in the faith of Gods fulness and willingness to supply all his wants; for, he should be *praying alwayes*, and therefore alwayes sensible of his need to pray. and confident of Gods readiness to answer, *Jam. 1. 6.* As there are severall sorts of prayer, some mental only, *Exod. 14. 15.* others vocal
also,

also, *Psal.* 5. 1. 2. some sudden or ejaculatory, *Nebem.* 2. 4. others more solemn and of greater length, *Rom.* 15. 30. And of those latter sort, again, some publick or Church-prayers, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1. others private or Family-prayer, *Acts* 10. 1, 2, 3. and others secret, as Closet-prayers, *Matth.* 6. 6. Some, again, are ordinary for ordinary causes, and performed at ordinary times, *Psal.* 55. 17. others are extraordinary, upon some special and weighty occasions, requiring more than ordinary affection and time of continuance, *Joel* 1. 14, &c. So all those severall sorts of prayer, are to be made conscience of, and none to be neglected, as God doth call to any of them: for, the Apostle, supposing there are severall sorts of prayer, injoyneth them to pray with all prayer. 6. It pleaseth God to exercise his dearest children, not only with the want of severall things necessary and good, but also with the presence of many things in themselves evil and hurtfull, and those evils both of sin and punishment, as for other reasons, so for this one, that of both the one and the other, they may be making daily errands unto God in prayer, for getting the former supplied, and the latter either removed or prevented: for, as was shown in the exposition, by prayer strickly taken, and as distinguished from supplication, we seek those good things which we want; and by supplication we deprecate evils and judgements: Now, the Apostle enjoyneth them to use both those; With all prayer and supplication, saith he. 7. However there be more intense affection, and fervencie of spirit, together with more assistance from the Spirit of God required in some sort of prayers, to wit, extraordinary, (*Joel* 2. 12. to 18.) than in others; yet all our prayers, even those which are ordinary, sudden and ejaculatory, ought to be joyned with some measure of spirituall fervencie and intense affection; neither can any of them be discharged aright without the assistance of, and influence from, the Spirit of God, as being a piece of most immediate worship to God, who is a Spirit, and will be worship-

ed in spirit and truth, *Job. 4. 24.* for, he requireth that *all prayer and supplication be in the Spirit.* 8. There is not any duty which Satan is a greater enemy to, or our hearts more averse from, than this of prayer in the spirit, it being no small difficulty to bring our hearts up to it, to keep them at it, or make them walk like it afterwards: for, so much is supposed while he requireth the exercise of watchfulness, chiefly over the heart, in order to prayer; *Watching thereunto.* 9. Neither is there any duty which Satan is more earnest to make us quit and fall from, after we have begun well, and which our hearts are more apt to be discouraged and take up an halt in, than in this duty of praying in the spirit, and chiefly under delayed answers: for, so much is supposed, while he requireth them to persist *with all perseverance*, and this not only in some, but all sorts of prayer. 10. As Christians ought to pray for others as well as for themselves; So, the more lively, watchfull and importunate we are in praying for our selves, the more our heart will be enlarged with desire to take inspection of the necessities of others, and to hold up their case to God: for, having enjoined them to pray for themselves *with all prayer and supplication, watching thereunto with all perseverance*, he biddeth them, next, *make supplication for others, even for all Saints.*

Verf. 19. And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel.

HE doth here exhort them to pray for himself in particular, shewing; first, what he would have them to ask from God on his behalf, even a gift and dexterity of uttering and expressing his conceptions in publick preaching, together with courage and boldnesse to deliver all his message, without stop or impediment, and as it were, with open mouth before all flesh as God should call him, without all base fear, *2 Tim. 1. 7, 8.*
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shame, *Rom.* 1. 16. partiality, 1 *Tim.* 5. 21. or diffidence of the truth of what he should deliver, *Psal.* 116. 10. which gift he doth illustrate from the use which he was to make of it, even that according to the trust committed to him by God, chap. 3. 8, 9. he might make known the Doctrine of the Gospel unto his hearers: which Doctrine, is here called a *mysterie*. See upon chap. 1. ver. -9. doct. 1. Besides what is already observed upon the parallel place, *Col.* 4. 3. Hence Learn, 1. As the Lords people ought chiefly to mind those in their prayers who are most instrumentall in the work of God; So it is the duty of Christians, to be seeking the mutuall help of one anothers prayers, and for this end to acquaint one another with their pressing wants and necessities, *Jam.* 5. 16. and especially Ministers should crave the assistance of their prayers who are committed to his charge: for, *Paul*, having exhorted them to pray for all Saints, ver. -18. doth here incite them to pray for himself in a speciall manner who was their Minister, and an eminent instrument in the Lords work; *And for me*, saith he. 2. The most able and gracious Ministers, are usually most sensible of thar weight and burden which is in the ministeriall charge, and so much sensible, that to be fitted for the employments of it, they see a necessity, not only of their own pains and study, their wrestling with God by prayer in secret; but also of the assistance and prayers of others: for, *Paul*, a gracious and able Minister, doth see it necessary to seek the help of others; *And for me*, saith he. 3. Not only is piety and knowledge required in a Minister, but also a gift of utterance, or a singular dexterity to expresse his conceptions unto others pertinently, plainly and takingly, without which his other abilities can avail but little to inform the judgements, or work upon the affections of hearers: for, therefore doth *Paul* desire chiefly that utterance may be given unto him. 4. Whatever gift a Minister hath of this kind, whether naturally or otherwise, yet when he cometh to the exercise of it in preach-

ing, he is not so much to rely upon his gift and skill of this kind, as to depend on God for immediate influence and assistance to strengthen his memory, uphold and order the organs of speech, and to give him the present and actuall exercise of his gift, lest he either miscarry in the use of it, or otherwise sacrifice to his own drag and net, when God is not depended on, and so provoke the Lord to blast his pains and make them uselesse: for, though *Paul* had already a gift of utterance, having now preached so long, and so well; yet he willeth them to seek not only the continuance, but also the actuall exercise of it from God whenever he should be put to make use of it; *And for me, that utterance may be given unto me.* 5. A plausible gift of utterance, is not all which is required in a Minister, he must have faithfull boldnesse to deliver his message, without base fear or partiality, joyned with his utterance, otherwise he may tickle the ear, but cannot rouse up dead and sleeping consciences: for, with utterance he desireth he may be assisted to *open his mouth boldly.* 6. So much incensed are people usually at plain dealing in their Ministers, so little can they endure to be used by them with holy freedom and boldnesse, *Isa. 30. 10.* So much is there of unmortified fear of flesh, even in the best of Ministers, *Matth. 10. 26, 28.* together with a sinfull loathnesse to intrust the Lord with the event or personall hazards which may follow upon their faithfull boldnesse, *Exod. 4. 10, 13.* that there is need of speciall assistance and present influence from God, to make a Minister open his mouth boldly, concealing no necessary truth, forebearing the reproof of no known vice, and fearing no flesh, without regard had unto any hazard or losse he may meet with for so doing: for, *Paul* will have them to seek from God on this behalf, *That he may open his mouth boldly.* 7. The serious perpending of the excellencie, worth and mysteriouse of the subject, the preaching and making known whereof, is intrusted to Ministers, would tend to convince them abundantly of their

own insufficiency for such a task, and of the need they stand in of assistance from God, and the help of peoples prayers for obtaining His assistance: for, this moved *Paul* to distrust his own strength, and to seek the help of their prayers; even *that he was to make known the mystery of the Gospel*. 8. The great end for which Ministers should be earnest with God for furniture and through-bearing themselves, and incite others to plead with Him on their behalf, is not that by vertue thereof they may gain applause, or get themselves exonerated before men, but that the Lords people may be edified, and Christ exalted, by laying open what rich and excellent things are held forth of Him in the Gospel: for, the end why he desireth a gift of utterance and boldnesse, is, *to make known the mystery of the Gospel*.

Verse 20. *For which I am an ambassadour in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*

HE doth, first, give two reasons, exciting them to pray for him; First, from his office, he was intrusted by God, as an ambassadour in Christs stead, to publish the glad tydings of Reconciliation with God, contained in the Gospel, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. Secondly, from his bonds, which did not hinder him to preach, seeing as the original word, signifying *in a chain*, doth imply that at this time he was not bound with fetters, but in the custody of a Souldier with whom he might go abroad, having (as the custom of some prisoners was) a chain on his right arm, which was tied to the Souldier's left arm. Next, he repeateth the gift which he would have them to seek from God on his behalf, even to deliver his message with courage and boldnesse: and he extendeth it further to all those other things which a Minister ought to advert unto in preaching. See upon *Col.* 4. ver. 4. doct. 11. Hence *Learn*, 1. As Christs Ministers do in a singular manner represent His Person, and being cloathed with authority from Him, are sent to treat and transact about

the greatest matters on earth in His Name, even the making up of peace and friendship betwixt God and sinners, *2 Cor. 5. 20.* So, their deportment, for gravity, prudence and holiness, ought to be such, as may conciliate authority to their message, and bring no disgrace or rub upon Him whose Person they do sustain. It is their duty also to manage their trust with faithfulness, speaking nothing but what they have a Commission for from Christ their Master, concealing nothing of what is intrusted to them to speak, but delivering all of it with that authority and gravity, boldness and majesty which becometh the ambassadours of Him who is Prince of the Kings of the earth, *Revel. 1. -5-* for, such is the honour and duty of ambassadours among earthly princes; and though this title of ambassadour for Christ, did belong to the Apostles in all respects chiefly, and in some respects to them only, as that they were confined to no certain charge, or country, *Matth. 28. 19.* and absolutely to be trusted as men who could not erre, at least in what they wrote, *2 Tim. 3. 16-* yet as to many other respects, and chiefly those which are mentioned in the Doctrine, it doth belong to all sent Ministers; and therefore they are called the Angels of the Churches, *Revel. 2. 1, &c.* For which I am an ambassadour, saith he, 2. The matter and purpose contained in the Gospel, even the way of making peace between God and sinners, is a business of great importance in Gods account, and such as he would have bear weight with us: for, an ambassadour is not sent among Princes and States for trifles, but for things of highest concernment. Now, God sendeth ambassadours to carry the message of the Gospel; For which Gospel I am an ambassadour, saith he. 3. So great desire hath God, that lost sinners embrace the Gospel with His peace and friendship offered in it, that He dealeth with them not as with traitours and rebels; but as persons of dignity and respect, that thereby they may be the more induced to accept His offers; for, Kings and States send not am-
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bassadours to private obscure men, but to persons of respect and worth. Now, God sendeth ambassadours with the Gospel to sinners: *For which I am an ambassadour.* 4. That God doth graciously condescend to send an honourable embassage for peace and friendship to worthlesse traitours and rebels, it should make the Lords people mind and respect those who are intrusted with it, and particularly to hold up their case unto God by prayer for strength, wisdom, and every other thing which becometh those who are imployed in such an honourable errand from the great God: for, he biddeth them pray for him, because he was an ambassadour sent from God with the Gospel; *For which I am an ambassadour.* 5. Though our provoked Lord doth send a message of peace and friendship unto a rebellious world, and putteth respect upon them by sending ambassadours to them in His stead; yet, such is their ingratitude, and such enemies are they to their own mercies, that in place of giving a thankfull meeting to such kind usage, they do what they can to affront the Lord, not only by sleighing His message, *Psal. 81. 11.* but by the disgracefull usage of His ambassadours, contrary to the law and practice of all Nations: for, *Paul*, though *Christis ambassadour*, was neverthelesse put in bonds for the Gospel. 6. As it concerneth the Lords people to pray to God for their Ministers at all times; So chiefly when they are in a suffering case, lest through their fainting in the day of adversity, they give the truth of God a dash, *Philip. 1. 19, 20.* and that they may be enabled by God to bear persecution with such undaunted courage as persecuters may see their labour to be but in vain, *Acts 5. 34. &c.* and the truth of God, for which they suffer, may receive no hurt but advantage by their sufferings, *Philip. 1. 12.* for, he urgeth them to pray for him, from this, that for the Gospel *he was an ambassadour in bonds.* 7. So mercifull and long-suffering is God, that when His offer of friendship is rejected by rebels and His ambassadours, contrary to the law of Nations

imprisoned and wronged; yet, he doth not presently give up with them, and denounce an irreconcilable war against them, but pursueth them with kindnesse, and in a manner beggeth their peace, and will not take a refusall: for, His will was, that *Paul*, being put in bonds by them, should yet discharge the office of an ambassadour towards them, and deliver the message of peace, even to those who put him and kept him in bonds, if they would have come to hear him; *For which I am an ambassadour in bonds.* 8. So zealous should Ministers be of Christs honour and the good of souls, that no sufferings for the Gospel should make them quit the preaching of it; but even when through persecution they are restrained of that liberty which they sometimes had, they ought to be alwayes doing and making use of what liberty they have: for, *Paul*, though in bonds, is yet doing the office of an ambassadour, and thirsting after a spirit of courage from God, for discharging of it faithfully and boldly; *I am an ambassadour in bonds, that therein, or thereof, meaning the Gospel, I may speak boldly.* 9. The Lord setteth bounds to the wrath of men, in so far as he doth easily abate the extremity of their rage towards His Servants, and doth not permit it to come to its full height, so long as He hath any use to make of them: for, though their rage carried them to put *Paul* in a chain, yet he restrained them, from making him a close prisoner, he had liberty to preach notwithstanding; *That therein I may speak boldly,* saith he. 10. The Lords Servants are to deliver the truths of God with much holy freedom and boldnesse, not only when they are far from apparent danger, but even when they are in the mouth of hazard, and ready to be swallowed up by it: If they speak at all, as speak they must, when God doth call them to it, it must be done without all base fear of flesh, with such confidence and boldness as may evidence they are not ashamed of their Master or message: for, *Paul*, even in bonds, resolveth to *speak the Gospel boldly*, and craveth the help
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of their prayers for that end. 11. However an unhumbléd heart, puſt up with pride and confidence in his own ſtrength, may judge it a task of no great difficulty to carry a ſuffering lot with undaunted courage before he be put to it, *Matth. 26. 33.* and will readily condemn all as faint-hearted cowards and baſe backſliders who ride not out the ſtorm with as much chearfulneſſe, courage and reſolution, as they conceive themſelves would do, *Job 4. 5, 6.* yet, an humbled heart, acquainted with ſufferings, will not judge ſo, but ſo conſcious is he of his own weakneſſe, and knoweth ſo well how hard it is for fleſh and blood to deny it ſelf, to poſtpone its own ſafety to the keeping of a good conſcience, how ready it is to faint under a continued croſſe, and find out ſubterfuges of ſubtile diſtinctions, thereby to plead for eaſe and ſparing of it ſelf, that he dare not truſt his own ſtrength, nor neglect, far leſſe contemn, the uſe of any mean appointed by God for his encouragement and ſtrengthening: for, *Paul ſeeth it was no eaſie thing to ſpeak boldly when in bonds, and that only God could make him ſo to do; and therefore beggeth the help of their prayers, as a mean appointed for obtaining courage from the Lord; I am an ambaffadour in bonds, that therein I may ſpeak boldly.* 12. It is not every ſort of boldneſſe in ſpeech, which a Miniſter ought to aim at, but ſuch as is beſeeming the excellency of his meſſage, the gravity of his office, and may conduce moſt to the end of his Miniſtery, the glory of God and good of the hearers; It is not fleſhly boldneſſe, or rather brazen-faced impudence, to vent every thing may tend to commend a man to his hearers, or to pleaſe their fleſhly humours; nor is it fooliſh temerity, or preſumptuous raſhneſſe, to ſpeak and utter the holy Oracles of God, without premeditation or ſerious conſideration of what is moſt fitting to be uttered, and likely to have ſucceſſe, at ſuch a time, on ſuch perſons, and in ſuch a place; But it is a ſpirituall holy boldneſſe, conjoynd with modeſty, gravity and prudence, and ſuch as carrieth

rieth alongſt with it in the perſon where it is, the ſenſe and feeling of his own infirmities, *1 Corinth. 2. 3.* for, the beſeemingneſſe and decency, here ſpoken of, as it may be extended to all thoſe neceſſary qualifications required in a Miniſter; So it doth chiefly qualifie that boldneſſe preſently ſpoken of; *That I may ſpeak boldly as I ought to ſpeak,*

Verſe 21. But that ye alſo may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus a beloved brother and faithfull miniſter in the Lord, ſhall make known to you all things.

THe Apoſtle, being now in the third part of the chapter, to conclude the Epistle, doth, firſt, ſhew, that becauſe he neither could write, nor was it expedient to write of every thing in the body of the Epistle, he had concredited much to the bearer, who was to give them an account eſpecially of *Pauls own affairs*, as how it went with him in priſon, how the work of the Goſpel did thrive by his Miniſtery, and generally *how he did*, or how he carried himſelf with courage and conſtancy under every diſpenſation. And that the bearer might get the more reſpect and credit, he is deſcribed, 1. from his name *Tychicus*, See *Act. 20.-4.* 2. from his ſtate as a Chriſtian, in which reſpect he is called a *brother*. See upon *Philip. 2. 25.* doct. 1. and a *beloved brother*, thereby to ſhew that he was loved by *Paul*, and worthy to be loved by them for his piety and parts. 3. from his office, in which reſpect he was a *miniſter*, and a *faithfull miniſter in the Lord*, as anſwering the truſt repoſed in him by the Lord Chriſt, whoſe ſervant he was. 4. from the confidence which *Paul* profeſſeth he had of his fidelity in his preſent imploymēt, while he perſwadeth them he would keep up nothing which it concerned them to know. Hence *Learn*, 1. The written Word of God in Scripture is ſo contrived, that though nothing neceſſary unto ſalvation be omitted, *Job. 20. 31.* yet our vain curioſitie to know other things

things not so necessary to be known, is not thereby satisfied: for, *Paul*, having committed unto writing the sum of necessary doctrine, relating both to faith and manners for the Churches benefit in all ages, doth not write any thing of his own particular concernments, but intrusteth them to the bearer, as not so necessary to be known to the ages following as to the age then present; *But that ye may also know my affairs, Tychicus shall make known all things.* 2. The life and conversation of Christians, and chiefly of Ministers, in publick and privat, under all cases, ought to be such, as they need not to be ashamed, who do know it; yea, and edification to the Church of God may arise from the knowledge of it: for, such was *Pauls* conversation, he acquainteth *Tychicus* with all, and sendeth him to *Ephesus* to acquaint the Church there with all. 3. It concerneth Christians much to inform themselves of the life and way of eminent men in the Church of God, and chiefly of those who are, or have been sufferers for truth, and of the severall passages of Gods gracious providence towards such, though not to satisfie their vain curiosity, *Act. 17. 21.* yet that thereby they may be incited to sympathize with them, *Heb. 13. 3.* to follow their example, *Jam. 5. 10.* and to blesse the Lord on their behalf, *2 Cor. 1. 11.* for, therefore doth *Paul* send *Tychicus* to make them know his affairs, and how he did. 4. A Minister ought to be so affectionate towards his flock, as to prefer their spiritual edification and advantage to his own private concernment: for, though *Paul* was now every day expecting death, and had few to attend upon him, as appeareth from *2 Tim. 4. 6, 10.* with *12, 16.* yet he sendeth *Tychicus* unto them, choosing rather that himself should want an attender, than they a comforter; *Tychicus shall make known unto you all things.* 5. The Minister of Christ should in like manner be ordered with prudence in giving expressions of his affection towards the flock, least otherwise his imprudent carriage in the manner of what is done, doth more hurt than the thing

thing it self can bring of good and advantage : for, therefore the Apostle doth not commit the evidences of his affection to be carried to them by every man, but one whom he could trust, and they would respect, even to *Tychicus a beloved brother and faithfull minister.* 6. As Ministers would be loath to give their recommendation and testimony to naughty persons and those who are not deserving, least thereby they wrong the Church of God, and prejudice their own estimation afterwards when the person recommended by them doth not walk answerably; So they should not deny a testimony to those whom they know to be deserving; so far should they be from labouring to obscure and bear down the graces and gifts of God which are eminent in any of their fellow-labourers, of purpose that they themselves alone may be thought of: for, *Tychicus* was a man deserving, and therefore *Paul* doth recommend him, which without doubt he would not have done otherwise; *Tychicus a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord.* 7. Though God may make use of unconverted Ministers to do good in his Church, *Matth. 10. 4.* with 8. yet no man can be a faithfull Minister, or approved of God in His work, except he have saving grace and be in Christ by faith: for, *Tychicus* is first a brother as a sound Christian, and then a *faithfull minister in the Lord.* 8. That Ministers are beloved one of another, and live in love among themselves, is a strong inducement to make the Lords people allow them room in their affections, and receive their message with better will off their hand: and divisions, carnal emulations, and strifes among Ministers themselves, make both their persons and office lose much of their deserved respect among the people: for *Paul* sheweth, that *Tychicus* was beloved by him, to make him have the more respect from them; *Tychicus a beloved brother.* 9. It is in a singular manner required of a Minister, and the prime piece of a Ministers commendation, that he be faithfull, that is, diligent in his work, *2 Tim. 4. 2.* sincere in his aimes and endeavours

deavours at the glory of God and the good of souls, 1 Pet. 4. 11. neither adding nor pairing unto what God hath committed unto him to speak, 2 Cor. 2. 17. Whatever a Minister be for learning, prudence, utterance and other abilities, if he be not faithfull, he is but naught, Matth. 25. 23, with 26. for, Paul commendeth Tychicus from this, that he was a faithfull minister in the Lord, 10. A faithfull Minister will give proof of his fidelity in all the pieces of his imployment, not only in publick preaching, but also in his private covering with the Lords people; yea, and in every thing will labour to answer the trust reposed upon him: for, Paul sheweth Tychicus would be faithfull, even in relating the case and state of Pauls particular affairs; *he shall make known unto you all things.*

Verse 22. *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.*

IN prosecution of the former purpose, he sheweth, first, he had not fallen upon Tychicus accidentally, but had chosen and sent him of purpose. And, next, declareth a twofold end for which he sent him, 1. that he might acquaint them with Paul's affairs, as ver. 21. And 2. that he might be comfortable unto them by his presence, message, preaching and otherwayes. Dost. 1. The greater paines are taken by Christ's servants to bring matter of edification and spiritual consolation unto the Lords people, they ought to receive it with so much the better will and likeing: for, Paul sheweth that both he and Tychicus were at the pains, the one to send, the other to be sent unto them, of purpose, hereby to induce them the more to receive the message sent; *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose.* 2. The putting a right impression of the case of Christ's suffering servants, and the state of the Gospels thriving upon the hearts of Christians in other remote parts of the Church, is a work

work worth the care and pains of most eminent Ministers, if it were to make them undergo a long and tedious journey for that same very end: for, *Tychicus was sent unto them for the same purpose, that they might know his affairs.* 3. We should labour so to inform our selves of the case and carriage of others, and how it goeth with the affairs of Christ's Kingdom elsewhere, as to be drawing matter of spiritual edification thence, and consequently not to feed our curious humour: for, *Tychicus in making known Pauls affairs, was to aim at their spiritual consolation, much more were they to aim at it themselves; that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.* 4. It is the duty of every Christian, and chiefly of a faithfull Minister, to have this end proposed unto himself in all his friendly visits bestowed upon his acquaintance, and chiefly upon his flock in all his familiar conferences with them, in all the intelligence he communicateth unto them, concerning Gods dealing with his Churches abroad, even that thereby they may not trifle-by precious time, or only satisfie curious ears, but furnish some matter of spiritual edification for bettering the inward man: for, *Tychicus was to make them know Pauls affairs, for this end, that thereby he might comfort their hearts.* 5. To know the several passages of Gods gracious providence towards His suffering servants, together with their undaunted courage under sufferings, and the use which God doth make of their sufferings to advance His truth and cause, is and may be sufficient ground of comfort and encouragement unto the Lords people, against the sorrow and sadnesse, which their sharp sufferings, considered in themselves, cannot choose but affect the lovers of truth with: for, *Paul* implyeth, that their hearing of his sufferings had saddened them, and sheweth the relation of Gods dealing with him would comfort them; *that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.* 6. A Christian sufferer, supported by God, will not be so anxious about his own case, as the case
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of others of the Lords people whom he knoweth to be in sorrow and heavinesse ; yea , and ready to halt , and be scandalized for His cause : for , *Paul*, knowing their grief , and fearing their fainting at his tribulations, chapter 3. 14. doth send *Tychicus* of purpose to comfort *their hearts*.

Vers. 23. *Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

NExt, in the conclusion of the Epistle , is contained the Apostles ordinary fare-well wish : wherein, designing those to whom he writeth by the name of *brethren*, he wisheth unto them in particular , 1. *Peace*, that is, peace with God , with their own conscience, one with another , and all sort of prosperity. 2. *Mutual love* among themselves ; for , Gods love to them is comprehended under *grace* in the following verse. 3. The grace of faith, the fountain of the former, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. All which he wisheth *from God the Father*, not excluding but including the Son and holy Ghost ; (See upon *Col.* 3. 17. doct. 3.) and *from Jesus Christ* the Mediator , through vertue of whose merit and intercession all saving benefits are conveyed unto the Elect. Doct. 1. Ministers , who would have their pains attended with successe towards the Lords people , ought to beg that from God by prayer to be wrought in them, which by their preaching they endeavour to inculcate on them : for, peace, love and faith, are the sum of all which he hath been presently instructing them in , and pressing upon them, and here he seeketh all from God by prayer; *Peace be to the brethren.* 2. A Ministers prayers for obtaining the Lords blessing upon his pains towards his flock, should be serious, fervent, insisted upon, and often inculcated untill a gracious answer thereof be granted : for , the Apostle began with this prayer, or wish, chap. 1. 2. and here he closeth with it ; *Peace be to the brethren.* 3. Even Believers are not made perfect in *grace*

grace at the first, the Lord doth carry on that work by steps and degrees, that somewhat of Him may be seen in every step; and therefore as themselves are bound to grow in grace, by adding one grace to another, *2 Pet. 1. 5, 6.* and one degree of the same grace to the former, *2 Pet. 3. 18.* So, it is the duty of others to help them on towards growth by their prayers and wishes: for, those who were already regenerated among the Ephesians, had faith, love, and peace wrought in them at the first, and *Paul* wisheth here a further degree of, and growth in, those from God to them; *Peace be to the brethren.*

4. Though it be the duty of all to live in peace and love, yet a truly Christian and peaceable frame of spirit, together with love, which is not a meer moral vertue, but a saving grace flowing from the root of faith, is only to be found among true Believers, and should be sought after by such especially; coldrifeness of affection, and unpeaceable walking, being more unbecoming them than any others: for, therefore doth he wish for *peace and love to the brethren*, that is, those chiefly who were brethren in Christ and born of God.

5. There cannot be a peaceable frame of spirit in any towards others, nor yet an harmonious walking with them, nor any thing else, except sinfull renting and shamelesse striving, but where the grace of love is; whereby the heart is armed against all irritations arising from the infirmities of others to break the bond of peace, *Eph. 4. 2, 3.* for, he conjoyneth these two in his wish, *peace*, whereof, one branch is a peaceable frame of heart and harmonious walking, and *love*: *Peace be to the brethren, and love.*

6. As the graces of faith and love are different, and therefore the one cannot be the form or essence of the other; So they are alwayes conjoynd; where one is, there the other must be also: for, he speaketh of them as two different graces, whereof the one doth necessarily follow upon the other; *And love with faith.*

7. See what is already observed from *Gal. 1. 3. Philip. 1. 2. Col. 1. 2.* upon the persons from whom, and through whom those

those good things are wished and sought; even from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verf. 24. *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.*

HERE the Apostle wisheth for grace, that is, Gods free favour and love in Christ, the fountain and sum of all the former good things wished-for, and enlargeth his wish towards all Believers, described from this, that they *love Jesus Christ in sincerity*, or incorruption (as the word signifieth) that is, not for a time only, but constantly, not in hypocrisie, or shew only, but sincerely and really; and so closeth up all with his *Amen*, as an evidence both of his affectionate desire and confidence of an answer. *Dott. 1.* Though we may have a more particular eye to some than to others, by making mention of them expressly in our prayers because of our charge of them, present employment about them, or other near relations towards them; yet, we ought not to exclude any, especially of these who have relation to Christ, but are to remember all such, at least in generall, and seek the same good things from God to them which we wish for others: for, the Apostle, having made expresse mention of the believing Ephesians, under the name of *Brethren*, ver. 23. doth here extend his charity and prayers towards all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in generall; *Grace be with all them*, saith he. 2. The more the heart is exercised in spirituall duties, especially in prayer, it groweth more warm and more enlarged to the exercise of all those saving graces, required in that duty, and especially to publick-mindedness, and the exercise of charity towards the Saints, and of faith in Jesus Christ: for, *Paul*, continuing his prayers and wish untill this verse, getteth his charity enlarged in the exercise of it, towards all Christians in generall, and his faith strengthened to the owning of Christ as his own; *Grace be with all that love our Lord.*

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3. Gods grace, or free favour, is the sum of all which a man needeth to wish, either for himself or others; it is virtually all things. so that the man that hath it, wanteth nothing; he hath all good and necessary things in their cause and fountain, he doth also possesse all such things in that measure God seeth fitting for him: for, in this part of his wish, which relateth to all lovers of Christ in generall, he doth only make expresse mention of *grace*, as virtually compryng peace, love and faith, which he wished to the brethren, ver. 23. *Grace be with all them that love our Lord.* 4. Love to Jesus Christ, is a sure mark of those who have saving interest in the good things purchased by Him, and one of those marks which are best known to the person who hath it; love to Christ where it is, cannot be well hid: for, *Paul*, designing those who might plead interest in the good things prayed-for, describeth them by their love to Christ, as being a mark both sure and easily discerned; *With all them that love our Lord.* 5. The Lords Servants ought to endeavour, that those, who are in a gracious state, and have right to the great and good things purchased by Christ, may know so much, and for that end would furnish them with the knowledge of such marks and evidences as may be most easily discerned where they are, and infallibly prove the soul that hath them to be in a state of grace: for, *Paul* giveth such a mark of those who had interest in the good things prayed-for, even love to Christ, that they might know so much of themselves; *With all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ.* 6. It is the duty of Ministers to lay hold on all occasions to recommend this grace of love to Christ, by holding forth those many good and excellent things which do accompany it, and are made evident to be in the heart by it, that so the Lords people may be the more incited to bestow their love and heart upon Him: for, *Paul*, to stir them up to the love of Christ, recommendeth this grace, by making it the mark and evidence of the man that hath interest in all the good things wished-for; *with all*

all them that love our Lord. 7. Though we are bound to pray even for those who are gracelesse, that God may bestow grace upon them; yet the more speaking evidences there be of true grace in any, we may be the more encouraged to pray to God for them, and with greater confidence to expect a gracious return of our prayers upon them: for, *Pauls* wishes to God, to which he affixeth an *Amen*, in evidence of his confidence to be heard, are put up in behalf of those who do *love our Lord Jesus Christ*. 8. As there are many who professe love to Christ, whose love is, and, when it is tryed, will be found to be but counterfeit, unsincere and not reall; So the good things promised to those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, do not at all belong to any of that sort, ~~whatsoever~~ their deluded hearts may fancie to the contrary, but to such only, who love Him really, sincerely, and certifye their love unto Him by keeping His commandments, *Joh. 14. 15.* and especially by loving those who are His, *1 Joh. 4. 20, 21.* for, the Apostle qualifyeth that love to Christ, which is an evidence of interest in the good things wished-for, by sincerity: which implyeth there is some love not sincere; *That love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.* 9. The more sincere a man is in the exercise of any grace, or practice of any duty, he will endure the longer; sincerity in good is alwayes attended with perseverance, but hypocrisie doth soon faint and wholly sit up at the last, *Joh. 27. 8, 9.* with 10. So much is implied by the word, here rendered *sincerity*, as *Tit. 2. -7.* which also signifieth *incorruption*: *That love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, Amen.*

ERRATA.

Page,	Line,	Read.]	Page,	Line,	Read.
21	22	Ephes. 5. 2.	ibid	36	or dycing
22	3	dele shall	310	5	any other
26	22	Col.	327	34	nearby
46	37	Philip. 2. 13.	333	16	6. 10.
60	12	inheritance	343	1	wrought by
91	5	by the	347	12	doct. 3.
138	6	and His	356	26	so see
202	10	actuated	363	10	6. 10.
213	12	over their	364	29	Whatever
233	38	dividing	413	24	1 Feb. 2.
235	19	Gen. 13.	425	30	Mark. 10.
253	2	subsistence	432	32	biddeth
267	3	its own	456	1	and
268	35	dycing of	463	28	Gal. 6.

